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A
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OF
SIXPENCES

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A POCKETFUL OF SIXPENCES

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A POCKETFUL OF SIXPENCES

BY
GEORGE W. E. RUSSELL

William E. Ruskine
11

"He was not an intellectual Croesus, but
his pockets were full of sixpences."

LORD BEACONSFIELD, "Lothair."

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1907

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TO
FITZROY STEWART

IN REMEMBRANCE OF
A WALK AT HARROW

MAY 7, 1872

AND ALL THAT CAME OF IT

"There is certainly a magic in the memory of schoolboy friendships; it softens the heart, and even affects the nervous systems of those who have no hearts."

Endymion.

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I

HOURS IN PARLIAMENT

I PAUSE in admiration as I pen my title. — It is suggestive, almost romantic, in sound, and carries with it all sorts of literary and theological associations. R. A. Vaughan gave us *Hours with the Mystics*, and the pious Tholuck *Hours of Devotion*, and the impious Byron *Hours of Idleness*. Leslie Stephen wrote *Hours in a Library*, and all manner of men contributed to *Half-hours with the Best Authors*. To everything there is its season, and the day on which I write—Tuesday, February 12, 1907—suggests the topic of Parliamentary hours; for, as Matthew Arnold wrote to his friend Adolens Leo, of the *Daily Telegraph*, in February 1871, “We are now on the point of commencing what Arminius, with his fatally carping spirit, called our ‘Thyesteän banquet of claptrap’—we are on the eve of the meeting of Parliament.” Could Arminius, that vigorous and unsparing critic of our national weaknesses, rise again from his shallow grave beneath the poplars of Bougival and revisit the scene where once he sate “to hear Mr. Vernon-Harcourt develop a system of

unsectarian religion from the *Life of Mr Pickwick*," he would probably say that the material of the banquet had not altered much in the course of thirty-six years; but the hours at which it is eaten are subject to perpetual change.

Why does Parliament always meet for a new session on Tuesday? This is not a riddle; but, if it were, I would defy the universe to guess the answer. Because in the year 1809, Monday having been proposed for the day of meeting, Mr. William Wilberforce, M.P. for the County of York, pointed out that this would involve travelling on Sunday; so the day was changed to Tuesday; and a Sabbatarian scruple has ruled the action of Parliament for ninety-eight years. But no such law of the Medes and Persians governs Parliamentary hours. Sir T. Erskine May, relying on the authority of a mysterious publicist called Vowel, who wrote on "The Order and Usage of the Parliaments in England," affirms that the House of Commons in the sixteenth century habitually met at six or seven in the morning and rose at eleven. By the reign of Charles II. the self-indulgent habits of a licentious age had so far relaxed the fibre of the House that it met at 9 A.M., and, as it were to counter-balance this shameful laxity, it remained at work till 4 P.M. Each succeeding reign brought a further modification of this austere timetable, and, two hundred years later, the Speaker took the chair at four. But, though the Commons took to meeting late, they made up for it by sitting late.

Lord Beaconsfield's definition of a gentleman was a man who was used to sitting up at night, and, if we must try to define the undefinable, this definition will serve as well as another. In *Endymion*, which describes Lord Beaconsfield's early experiences in Parliament, the veteran Sir Fraunceys Scrope, recalling the habits of his youth, says, "We were gentlemen, used to sit up late, and should have been sitting up somewhere else had we not been in the House of Commons." In 1764, when Wilkes's case was under discussion, the House sat till half-past seven in the morning; in 1783, in a debate on European peace, till nearly eight; in 1785, on commercial intercourse with Ireland, till after eight.

The turn of the century brought no improvement in Parliamentary hours. In 1810 the committal of Sir Francis Burdett to the Tower kept the House awake till half-past seven A.M., and in 1831 the excitement of the Reform Bill had the same effect. When the Reform Bill of 1831 became the Reform Act of 1832, it brought into Parliament a class of men who were not so fond of late hours as Sir Fraunceys Scrope. Solid manufacturers from the Midlands and the North, who attended to their business all day, dined at five, and drank tea at nine, murmured when the Whips kept them out of bed till an hour at which they were accustomed to set out for the mill or the counting-house. Salford's first M.P., Joseph Brotherton (1783-1857), was the spokesman of his brother-malcontents; the annual

motion by which he endeavoured to make the House of Commons adopt more reasonable hours became one of the standing jokes of Parliamentary life; and "Old Nurse Brotherton putting the House to bed" was a favourite subject for caricaturists and cartoonists. But these philosophers of the bed-ward school made no impression on their day and generation. Their protests fell on the deaf ears of men who had been early inured to the bracing life of ballrooms and gambling-houses; and statesmen who, like Lord Palmerston, had "played the game all round" encouraged these habits of nocturnal exertion. In the "Pacifico" debate of 1850, Palmerston, already an old man, spoke, as Mr. Gladstone said, "from the dusk of one day to the dawn of another"; and, fifteen years later, the octogenarian leader of the House sat sleepless on the Treasury Bench night after night, and played the game of debating and dividing with the same untiring vigour as had made him in earlier life the hero of Almack's and Crockford's. Palmerston died in 1865, and succeeding leaders did nothing to check the system of late hours. Rather did they encourage it, on the ground that the physical exhaustion of the House often enabled a Minister to force through at three in the morning a motion or a clause which would have had no chance at eleven in the evening.

But, after all, competitive endurance is a game that two can play at, and in Mr. Gladstone's first Administration the young bloods of the Tory party

kept the Prime Minister and his colleagues out of bed a good deal oftener than they liked. An "All-night Sitting," as a method of testing the relative strength of Government and Opposition, became one of the institutions of Parliament. In 1877 the South Africa Bill was debated from four on a Tuesday afternoon to 6.15 on Wednesday. In 1878 the project of bringing Indian troops to Europe was debated from the afternoon of one day to half-past nine next morning, and in 1879 a Public Works Loan Bill was discussed till 7 A.M. This curious art of "affecting the decision of the House otherwise than by argument"—the phrase is Mr. Gladstone's—was more commonly called Obstruction; and it reached its height on the 31st of January 1881, when the House, having met at four on Monday, continued sitting till 9.30 on Wednesday morning, and then was only adjourned by the summary action of the Speaker. Since that heroic period, when exhausted nature was only sustained by relays of marrow-bones and oysters, champagne and whisky-toddy, the precious privilege of sitting up indefinitely has been curtailed by a succession of Standing Orders. It is true that these orders are constantly suspended, and "all-night sittings" and "lively scenes in the Commons" continue to supply the Parliamentary journalist with useful copy; but, on the whole, common sense has prevailed, and the shade of Joseph Brotherton is satisfied.

"Who goes home?" This strange question,

suddenly bellowed by the door-keeper and re-echoed through all the lobbies and corridors by raucous policemen, always startles the new member into a fever of curiosity. It only means that the House has done its work and is going to bed. But the form in which the announcement is made is a curious survival of the days when home-going Burgesses and Knights of the Shire used to form themselves into little groups for mutual help and joint defence against the footpads who haunted Broad Sanctuary or lay in wait among the thickets of St. James's Park. In days more recent than those of the footpads the homeward walk after the House was up was not always unattended by perils of various kinds. One of those perils led eventually to the tragic death of Lord Castlereagh. Another gave occasion for an official joke against Sir George Grey. That excellent man was Home Secretary in Lord John Russell's Government of 1846-52. One day he sent for the Sergeant-at-arms, and said, "I don't think it quite safe for Lord John to walk home from the House to Chesham Place. There are all sorts of evil-disposed characters about the Birdcage Walk and Pimlico, and he is a very small and feeble man. You had better tell the Superintendent of the House of Commons police to have him watched home." The Sergeant did as he was bid, and the Superintendent cheerfully replied, "Oh, that's all right. Lord John is always watched home—and so is Sir George Grey. But we don't let them know, because we don't want to

frighten them." Sir George Trevelyan, though in 1866 a young member of peculiar vigour, seemed to have been afflicted by the Brothertonian dislike of late hours in the House.

There we sit, with ranks unbroken, cheering on the fierce
debate,
Till the sunrise lights us homeward as we trudge through
Storey's Gate,
Racked with headache, pale and haggard, worn by nights of
endless talk,
While the early sparrows twitter all along the Birdcage Walk.

Such being the pains and perils of Parliamentary life, how wise was the maternal solicitude of the Duchess of Bellamont in *Tancred* about her son Lord Montacute, when he was asked to stand for the County! "The only part I don't like is his being kept up very late at the House, so I begged him to be very strict in making his servant always have coffee ready for him, very hot, and a cold fowl or something of the sort." Pitt, as everyone knows, made his Parliamentary supper on veal pie and port wine. Sir Robert Peel used to eat a curious little round custard-pudding, of a type which is still provided at the Refreshment Bar. Mr. Gladstone drank a cup of the strongest tea, and slept heroically under the influence of that singular nightcap. But even to constitutions sedulously fortified the walk home after a late sitting has often proved perilous. "An adjourned debate, a tough beefsteak, a Select Committee still harder, and an influenza caught at

three o'clock in the morning in an imprudent but irresistible walk home with a confidential Lord of the Treasury"—this was a combination of evils which once cut short a promising and ambitious career. Nowadays, when health has become an obsession, when we cultivate our bodies far more carefully than our intellects or our souls, and when every callow youth has a disease, a doctor, and a diet, our M.P.'s are wiser than their forerunners. If business is slack, they "pair for the night," and so escape from frosts and fogs. If an interesting debate or an important division keeps them late, they whirl home in motors or electric broughams. Failing these more majestic conveyances, an occasional half-crown dropped into the policeman's capacious palm will secure the attendance of what Lothair in an inspired moment hailed as "the Gondola of London."

II

A PARLIAMENTARY SWAN-SONG

"SWANS sing before they die." Mr. H. W. Massingham is the Swan of the present hour, but the change which awaits him is not death: it is transition from a lower to a higher stage of being.¹ Ere yet he actually passes, he utters his Swan-Song of farewell to the scenes which he has so long adorned, and that song is the subject of my present meditations. It is Wordsworthian all over in its simple pathos. As Mr. Massingham gazes from the Gallery on the House which he has described so graphically, he seems to apostrophize the Speaker, the Clerks, the Sergeant, and the Mace, just as Wordsworth apostrophized the Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves—

Think not of any severing of our loves !

It is true that he is ceasing to be a Parliamentary Correspondent, but only that he may become a political editor.

¹ Mr. Massingham, sometime Parliamentary Correspondent of the *Daily News*, became Editor of the *Nation* in 1907.

I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.

To those bright beings who haunt the lobbies in
quest of news, and seek their meat from the com-
municative M.P., he says, in words or in effect,

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make.

He is no longer numbered with them, for he has
floated to a higher sphere—but

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction.

When he looks ahead his vision is blurred by un-
bidden tears, and he feels that

The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality.

That eye, scanning the House of Commons from the
Reporters' Gallery, has noted a great many changes,
actual and impending, and those changes supply the
topics of the Swan-Song. "The disappearance of
Parliamentary oratory"—on this Mr. Massingham
observes that, with the exception of Mr. Churchill, no
member seems to have any regard for literary form.
I do not know how this opinion would be received
by Mr. Asquith or Mr. Paul; but, if it is well founded,
it only marks the last stage in a long process of
deterioration. Distant indeed are the days when a
Parliamentary orator nerved himself for a special
effort by declaiming his favourite passages from
Demosthenes, and when an important speech was

considered imperfect unless it was garnished with a quotation from Virgil or Horace. But the practice of preparing one's speeches with some attention to the verbal medium survived at any rate to the end of Mr. Gladstone's days. Beyond question, that eminent man not only prepared the substance and arrangement of his speeches with scrupulous care, but also learned his perorations by heart, and not seldom wrote them down. Wonderfully effective those perorations were; and, though the speeches taken in bulk are unreadable from their verbosity, the last three or four sentences are often models of grace and strength. I still remember as if I had heard it yesterday the conclusion of his speech on the Second Reading of the Irish Land Bill in 1881: "As it has been said that Love is stronger than Death, even so Justice is stronger than popular excitement, stronger than the passion of the moment, stronger even than the grudges, the resentments, and the sad traditions of the past. Walking in that light we cannot err. Guided by that light—that Divine light,—we are safe. Every step that we take upon our road is a step that brings us nearer to the goal, and any obstacle, even although for the moment it may seem insurmountable, can only for a little while retard, and never can defeat, the final triumph." I choose that particular peroration out of many, not because it was better than the others, but because it elicited a characteristic criticism from a Radical M.P. who has since retired—"D——d copy-book-y!"

Mr. Bright's method of arranging the form of a speech (after the matter had been duly digested) was by way of what he called "Islands." He used to divide his subject into departments, and to each part he supplied an "island"—in other words, one carefully-constructed sentence which epitomized and drove home what had gone before. "When once you have got your islands settled," he used to say, "you can trust yourself to swim from one to the other. Of course keep your best island for the peroration; and, when once you have produced it, let no power on earth tempt you to go on speaking. Say it, and sit down."

Other Parliamentarians there were who quite palpably learned their speeches by heart. These orations were extraordinarily elaborate and ornate, such as no human being could by any stretch of imagination be supposed to deliver on the spur of the moment, and were declaimed with all the requisite accessories of voice and manner and gesture. One could guess that they were all composed in imitation of Sheil's speech on the Aliens (which is perhaps the most highly-decorated piece of English in the literature of oratory); and they were, in a way, impressive to hear. The chief drawback was that, having been prepared in advance, they generally had little relevance to the topic actually under discussion, and that, owing to the exigencies of debate, they sometimes were delivered at most inappropriate moments. Pre-eminent performers in this line of untimely declama-

tion were Mr. P. J. Smyth, M.P. for Tipperary, and Mr. Joseph Cowen, M.P. for Newcastle.

Another change which Mr. Massingham notes is the decay of personal ascendancy. Sir Robert Peel, it was said, "played on the House like an old fiddle." Lord Palmerston coaxed the Tories and jockeyed the Radicals, and contrived to produce the impression that he was the indispensable leader. Disraeli's mastery of the House always seemed to be complete, and to be based on a profound contempt for Parliamentary nature, veiled in the most elaborate politeness. Mr. Gladstone never dominated the House, for his presence on the Treasury Bench always stirred the Tories into active, impassioned, and often victorious opposition; but over his own followers his sway was absolute. A great portion of his party seemed to part with the right of private judgment, and to accept every word of their chief as infallibly true and every act as incontrovertibly wise. Even the few who ventured in their own minds to question the wisdom of the various and contradictory policies which they were bidden to support were very shy of disclosing their dissent. Said the agent to the independent M.P. after the annual meeting of the Liberal Association: "What you said about Mr. Gladstone made a bad impression." "Why? I only said that he wasn't infallible." "Perhaps he is not; but our people don't like to be told so."

The present House of Commons, according to Mr. Massingham, contains "no great individual talent,

but a larger number of able men than any former Parliament." I fancy that I know two or three accomplished gentlemen on each side of the House who would rather demur to the statement about "individual talent," but it seems to be generally conceded that the "Rank and File" (as the bulk of the Liberal party are politely styled) show a good deal more intelligence and a good deal more independence than their predecessors of 1892-5, and yet the men of that despised period were reckoned the superiors of many who had gone before them. When the Parliament of 1892 had been sitting for a week or so, I heard Mr. Speaker Peel tell Mr. Gladstone that the new members seemed to have some remarkably good speakers among them; to which Mr. Gladstone replied, "I am extremely glad to hear it. It will put some of us old ones on our mettle." A Whig statesman who entered Parliament in 1813 and lived till 1878 once said to me: "In my young days there were a dozen men in the House who could make a better speech than anyone now living; but there were not another dozen men who could even understand what they were talking about." In this respect, at any rate, if Mr. Massingham is right, the lapse of a century has brought an improvement.

The Swan-Song, if it may be roughly summarized in unworthy prose, amounts to this. The Liberal party in the House of Commons is overwhelmingly strong, abounds in able men, and is rich in ideas. It may tend to be fissiparous in minor matters, but it is

solid on all great issues of national politics. It talks inartistically, but only because it works absorbingly; and, though it admits no overmastering ascendancy, it is profoundly loyal to its leader, and, what is more remarkable still, "the present Cabinet have complete confidence in one another."

It will be for Mr. Massingham, when "seated in his place of light" as Editor of "*The Liberal Review*" and hebdomadal surveyor of the political world, to tell us why it is that a party endowed with such amazing advantages still submits to be cozened by Mr. Balfour and browbeaten by the House of Lords.

III

POLITICAL WOMEN

LET me hasten to protest that nothing insolent is intended by my title. An obsequious Incumbent, giving notice of his Confirmation Classes, once announced that the young ladies would assemble at the Vicarage and the young women at the school-room; but it was found in the result that the Squire's daughters were not flattered by their exclusion from the ranks of womanhood. "Person," though in its first intention a sexless word, has come, especially when coupled with the epithet "young," to signify a damsel from the dressmaker's or the bonnet-shop. "Female," for some occult reason, arouses groundless anger, as on the famous occasion when Mr. Mortimer Knag addressed Mrs. Blockson as "Female," and drew upon himself the crushing retort, "With regard to being a female, sir, I should wish to know what you considered yourself." So, after all, we fall back upon "Woman" as the best, the safest, and the most comprehensive word; not emulating Mr. Turveydrop's emotional address, "O woman, woman, what a sex you are!" but remembering, as the daughters of

Girton and Newnham are quick to tell us, that in Greek tragedy "Woman" is an apostrophe that befits a Queen.

The events of the past week, made memorable by the activities of the suffrage-seekers, have led me to meditate on the part played by women in English politics; and, though they neither possessed nor, as far as we know, desired the suffrage, that part has been considerable.

Dryasdust would tell us that, in mediæval England, peeresses in their own right and abbesses of the largest convents were summoned to Parliament, and sate there without voting — like so many female Bishops of Sodor and Man—and without speaking, in the public and technical sense, though not without the solace of private conversation. But I am not quite sure that Dryasdust can base his statement on any authority which would have satisfied Stubbs or Freeman, and I am inclined to place the vision of Ladies in Parliament among those "last enchantments of the Middle Age" which fascinated Miss Mangnall and were perpetuated by Mrs. Markham.

But when we turn to the political energies of ladies outside Parliament, our national history teems with famous examples. Anne Clifford, Countess of Dorset, Pembroke, and Montgomery, had a character as masterful as the great Elizabeth herself, and within her own sphere of influence exercised as absolute a sway. To the Secretary of State, who was presuming

to put forward a candidate of his own for the representation of Appleby, she sent a cartel of defiance which has ever since been famous: "I have been bullied by an usurper, I have been neglected by a Court, but I will not be dictated to by a subject. Your man shan't stand.—ANNE DORSET, PEMBROKE, and MONTGOMERY." By a curious coincidence (for there is no heredity in the matter) the name of Lady Carlisle was as conspicuous politically in the reign of Charles I. as it is in that of Edward VII., and its bearer was even described by the majestic Clarendon as a "Stateswoman." The correspondence of Rachel, Lady Russell, widow of the Whig martyr, shows that she was active in the City of Westminster and the County of Middlesex, promoting and opposing candidatures, and "working" her husband's name, to use a modern vulgarism, "for all it was worth." Lady Russell died in 1723, but the race of stateswomen by no means expired with her.

Mary Verney (1737-1810), whose name and possessions have now passed into another family, exercised so much influence in the numerous Boroughs of Buckinghamshire that Pitt thought it worth his while to buy her support by making her a peeress in her own right. Charlotte, Countess of Bridgewater, who after her husband's death in 1823 reigned at his magnificent place, Ashridge, near Great Berkhamstead, ruled the political roast so absolutely that her tenants, being asked by the Returning Officer for whom they voted, thought it quite enough to reply, "We

votes for Lady Bridgewater." Everyone knows about the beautiful Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, and the drayman whom she bribed with a kiss to vote for her friend Charles Fox; and even more heroic was the conduct of Mrs. Beaumont of Bretton, long one of the Whig Queens of the West Riding. To her, at the crisis of a hard-fought contest, a wire-pulling Tory said in triumph: "Well, it's all right for us. Ten thousand guineas go down to Yorkshire to-night by a sure hand." "The deuce they do!" exclaimed this intrepid woman; and that night the bearer of the guineas was stopped by a seeming highwayman on the Great North Road and relieved of his burden, which was applied to the service of the Buff and Blue.

The philosophical Lord Acton, surveying these and similar activities of wealthy womanhood, was moved to record a murmur: "We have attached political influence to property so closely that rich old women like the Duchess-Countess or Lady Londonderry are dreadful powers in the land." The "Duchess-Countess" was Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland in her own right, and wife of the second Marquis of Stafford, who was created Duke of Sutherland in honour of his consort's possessions. An absolute despot was the Duchess-Countess, as 15,000 evicted crofters of Sutherland knew by personal experience. Lady Londonderry was Frances Ann Vane-Tempest, whose collieries made her husband, as to this day they make her grandson, one of the political powers

of Durham ; and, even in days more accustomed to territorial dictation than the present, Lady Londonderry was felt to have pressed her prerogative to its limit when, at the General Election of 1837, she issued a manifesto, signed by herself and countersigned by her husband, instructing her tenants about the vote which they should give, and not obscurely intimating what would happen if they disregarded the precept: "We assure all those who answer to the solemn appeal that we make to them—who step forward with heart and soul in the Conservative cause to rescue the country from Radical domination—that the sense of obligation to us personally will be for ever registered in our memories ; and that the gratitude of ourselves and our family to those who live around us and on our property will be in proportion to this important demand we make upon them to prove their fidelity and their attachment to our sentiments and confidence in our opinions. We send these our recommendations to our esteemed friend the Honourable Henry Liddell, to make every use of them he shall think fit ; and we have begged him especially to report to us those who answer zealously to our call, and those who are unmindful and indifferent to our earnest wishes."

In more recent years gentler methods of persuasion have been used. The excellent Lady Burdett-Coutts had no tenants to cajole or coerce, even had she wished to do so. Like John Wesley, she took the

whole world for her parish, and on the eve of the General Election of 1880 she issued a proclamation, *urbi et orbi*, enforcing the need for a "strong Government," and counselling the constituencies to express their confidence in Lord Beaconsfield and his Administration. In effective contrast to the high-handed doings of former days may be placed the action of Charlotte, Lady Ossington (widow of Mr. Speaker Denison), at the General Election of 1885. The newly-enfranchised labourers on her estate, scarcely realizing their independence, enquired of the agent which way her Ladyship would like them to vote. Lady Ossington's reply was: "As a lifelong Liberal, I must of course desire that everyone should vote according to his conscience."

It was perhaps remarkable that the lady who, by the necessities of her position, was by far the most active and powerful politician among English women should have been the most vehement opponent of Women's Rights. In 1870 a young matron, who bore a name highly honoured in English history, suddenly became conspicuous on political platforms, and the spectacle of her performances produced this remarkable protest: "The Queen is most anxious to enlist everyone who can speak or write to join in checking this mad, wicked folly of 'Women's Rights,' with all its attendant horrors, on which her poor feeble sex is bent, forgetting every sense of womanly feeling and propriety. Lady — ought to get a *good whipping*. It is a subject which

makes the Queen so furious that she cannot contain herself."

When we contemplate, even in fancy, the picture of Lady —— subjected to corporal punishment for her political activities, we feel that we have travelled far in these seven-and-thirty years.

IV

POLITICAL WIVES

IS there anybody on earth besides myself who remembers *The Next Generation*? I am bound to admit that it was a novel with a purpose, and therefore deserved to perish and be forgotten. But, should anyone take the trouble to disinter it, he would be rewarded by finding a good deal of material relevant to present commotions. *The Next Generation* was published in 1871. Its author was J. F. Maguire, then the brilliant and patriotic member for the City of Cork, and in earlier years a leading figure in the "Young Ireland" movement. The purpose of the book was to enforce Women's Rights, the certain triumph of which seemed to the author imminent. The ladies of Mr. Maguire's imagination did not confine themselves to the modest demand that they might be put on an electoral equality with men. They firmly intended to sit in the House of Commons, to have their share of places in the Government, and even, in due time, to furnish England with a Prime Minister. I have not set eyes on the book for five-and-thirty years, but, if I remember aright, the Right

Honourable Martha Grimshawe was, as her name would suggest, a peculiarly resolute Leader of the House and a Chancellor of the Exchequer whom there was no cajoling. Similarly, Lady Matilda and Lady Selina, the leading Suffragettes of Sir George Trevelyan's extravaganza "The Ladies in Parliament," aim at nothing less than a forceful entry into the House itself. The spirited harangue in which Lady Matilda summons her down-trodden sisters to the crowning struggle might have been written in 1907 instead of 1866:—

One chance remains, the last and surest course
Of injured worth—a bold appeal to force.
Through Crescent, Terrace, Circus, and Arcade
Shall scouts proclaim a feminine crusade.
Let Knightsbridge, Pimlico, and Brompton meet
Where Grosvenor Place is lost in Eaton Street,
While Portman Square and Hyde Park Gardens march
At break of dawn beneath the Marble Arch.
Across Victoria Road, with beat of drum,
Straight towards the Abbey bid our musters come ;
Beset the House and all approaches guard
From furthest Milbank round to Palace Yard ;
Invest the Lobby, raise across the courts
A barricade of Blue-books and Reports,
Till man, who holds so light our proper charms,
Is brought to reason by material arms.

I do not know what the late Lord Herschell thought about Women's Rights, but of women as public speakers he had a very high opinion ; indeed, he used to say that he had never heard a woman who spoke badly. The most vehement supporter of masculine rule could scarcely say as much of

masculine oratory. But to-day I am not thinking of ladies who strive and cry and make their voices heard in the street, but rather of those who have been content to play the less conspicuous part of the Political Wife. Of these England in the last half-century has shown some choice and memorable examples. Pre-eminent among the crowd was Lady Palmerston, who combined the gifts of beauty, wealth, sweet temper, and social skill. Her Saturday Evening parties at Cambridge House, once the home of the Duke of Cambridge and now the Naval and Military Club, were reckoned among the most powerful agencies which kept the Liberal party from splitting into a Whig and a Radical section. Every invitation-card was written by the hostess's own hand, though tremulous with age. All sorts and conditions of men and women met under the famous roof, and all were received with the same frank and easy welcome. Open foes were received as graciously as devoted friends. The only crime which was punished by exclusion was treachery to Palmerston on the part of those who professed to be his followers. And yet these social arts did less to prolong the Palmerstonian rule than the minute care which his wife bestowed on every detail relating to his health, exercise, diet, and sleep. The widow of a public man who lived to be ninety told me with pride that she had kept her lord alive by making him drink a bottle of brown sherry every day; but Lady Palmerston's was a more temperate, though not a

less careful, system. It was commonly believed in the Liberal party that one of the causes which contributed to Lord Palmerston's ascendancy over his colleague and rival, Lord John Russell, was that Lady John's solicitude for her husband's health led her to hurry him off whenever he had a spare evening to the delicious lodge in Richmond Park which served them for a country house. Political mankind loves to see its leaders, and the Palmerstons were always on view—he in the House of Commons and she in Piccadilly,—while the Russells were reading poetry in the groves where James Thomson wrote it, or watching the sunset on the Thames from the crest of Richmond Hill.

Another of the Political Wives who played a great though an indirect part in politics was Lady Beaconsfield. Her modest wealth had made her husband independent, and, though she lacked beauty, grace, and education, she possessed the supreme art of making a home comfortable. The story of her silent endurance of agony, when her finger was crushed in the carriage-door and she would not distract her husband's mind from his impending speech, is well known, and is heroic. Scarcely less heroic was her habit of sitting up at night when Disraeli was late at the House and plying him on his return with a raised pie and a bottle of champagne.

From Mrs. Disraeli, whom her husband quite rightly made a peeress in her own right, it is natural to turn to Mrs. Gladstone, who presumably refused to be

similarly extinguished. And surely there never was a Political Wife who played a greater part in the career and fortunes of her husband. In old age Mr. Gladstone said to a friend, "My wife has known every political secret I have ever had, and has never betrayed my confidence." Onlookers often found a peculiar enjoyment in watching her while she was undergoing the operation of being "pumped." The smile was so childlike and bland; the look of ignorance so sunny and convincing; the discomfiture of the pumper so palpable and so complete. An incessant vigilance, born of an adoring love, hedged Mr. Gladstone round and defended him from the lightest breath which might have disturbed or annoyed him. Every incident which bore, however remotely, on his health, comfort, or enjoyment was studied with a care which had become a second nature. That Mr. Gladstone remained in unbroken vigour and working capacity down to the very verge of ninety years was due, in greater part than the world could realize, to the ideal perfection of his married life. And yet Mrs. Gladstone's direct contribution to politics never extended much beyond the opening of a bazaar or the presidency of the Women's Liberal Federation.

Almost exactly the same account might be given of the statesman who in later years was Mr. Gladstone's only rival. The late Lord Salisbury, a man of delicate health and despondent temper, owed, not indeed his political gifts, but the vigour and persistence with which he used them, to his courageous and

ever-sanguine wife. Lady Salisbury was a Political Wife in one sense of the term which did not apply in Mrs. Gladstone's case. She placed great reliance on social methods, and, reinforced by the splendour of Hatfield and the capaciousness of Arlington Street, she made great play with invitations to her parties, inviting some and excluding others, and treating the whole business of entertainment as a system of political rewards and punishments. When we consider the influence which Lady Salisbury exercised, directly on her husband, indirectly on his party, and through her sons on the present controversies, one cannot refuse her a high place among Political Wives; and yet I believe it is true that she shrank so instinctively from public appearances that she could scarcely muster resolution to say "I thank you for your gift" or "I declare this Hall open."

But I may be reminded that there are "Political Wives" besides the wives of Prime Ministers. I by no means forget it. A Political Wife on the heroic scale was the late Lady Spencer, and what she was to her husband all through his troubled Viceroyalty of 1882-5 can never, I suppose, be fully known. Lady Rosebery did not live to see her husband Prime Minister, but the period of their married life coincided with the most successful part of his political career. The late Lady Derby was pronounced by people very well qualified to judge the best political talker in London; but none of these ladies, as far as I can remember, ever showed her face on a political

platform, or addressed so much as a drawing-room meeting. It may again be observed that, the less important the part played by the husband, the more eager and truculent is the Political Wife. The wife of a minor official, especially if he belongs to the Royal Household, is apt to speak as if the stability of the Administration depended on her efforts, and the consort of the common M.P. takes her citizenship very seriously indeed. The Tory lady in *Endymion*, when she saw a political crisis approaching, stopped her carriage in Pall Mall and "rapidly enquired of a friendly passer-by, 'Tell me the names of the Radical members who want to turn out the Government, and I will invite them directly.'" The belief that one is pulling the wires of a great machine is, I imagine, one of the purest pleasures that life affords; and the Political Wife, who thinks that, through her little dinners or her swollen routs, her confidential correspondence or her paragraphs in "Society" papers, she is securing her husband's position or consolidating his party, is a woman greatly to be envied. True, she may be only wasting his substance and making herself ridiculous, but, like Wordsworth's "Happy Warrior," she

Finds comfort in herself and in her cause,
and lies down each night in the soothing assurance
that she has served and saved the State.

V

GREAT LADIES

WHAT should I do without my friendly correspondent? He is always rich in fruitful hints, and my recent remarks on Political Women and Political Wives have prompted him to ask—"Why not try Great Ladies?" The suggestion reveals, I think, a nice and discriminating sense of feminine distinctions, for, though some Great Ladies have been active politicians on their own account and some have played at politics for their husbands' sakes, yet some of the greatest have been entirely unpolitical, and quite as many have been spinsters as wives.

Of course the external tokens of greatness are governed by a law of perpetual mutability. The costume, the bearing, the social habits, the phraseology, and the pronunciation which were held to be characteristically "great" in one age would be regarded as vulgar or ludicrous if they were revived in a later generation. The extraordinary deference paid to rank and title in the eighteenth century would only provoke a smile in the twentieth. The Duchess who said to her footman, "I wish to good-

ness you wouldn't stand rubbing your great greasy belly against the back of my chair," would be suitably bracketed with the lady of similar rank who objected to Whitefield's preaching on the ground that "it is monstrous to be told you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl on the earth." But the inner and essential elements of greatness remain the same in every age, and I do not know that the portrait of a Great Lady has ever been better drawn than by Ben Jonson in his address to Lucy Harington, Countess of Bedford:—

This morning, timely rapt with holy fire,
I thought to form unto my zealous muse
What kind of creature I could most desire
To honour, serve, and love as poets use.
I meant to make her fair and free and wise,
Of greatest blood, and yet more good than great—
I meant the day-star should not brighter rise,
Nor lend like influence from his lucent seat.
I meant she should be courteous, facile, sweet,
Hating that solemn vice of greatness—pride ;
I meant each softest virtue there should meet,
Fit in that softer bosom to reside.
Only a learned and a manly soul
I purposed her—that should, with even powers,
The rock, the spindle, and the shears control
Of destiny, and spin her own free hours.
Such when I meant to feign, and wished to see,
The muse bade "Bedford" write, and that was she!

Such was the ideal of a Great Lady in the reign of James I., and in the reign of Victoria the same characteristics held good. Dr. Pusey, whose octogenarian mother, Lady Lucy Pusey, was a typical

Great Lady of the old school, wrote thus in 1875: "It used to strike me in young days how the preference of others to self, the great shock which it evidently was to give pain to anyone, the consideration of everyone's feelings, the thinking of others rather than oneself, the pains that no one should feel neglected, the deference shown to the weak or the aged, the unconscious courtesy to those socially inferior, were the beauty of the refined worldly manners of the 'old school.'"

Of course the greatest of Great Ladies was Queen Victoria, in whom the "divinity" that "doth hedge" a Sovereign was combined with absolute simplicity. There are those still living who saw her at the Opera sitting side by side with the Empress Eugénie, then in the meridian splendour of her beauty, and so robed and jewelled as to set the fashion for all Europe. The story went that the Empress, before she sat down, looked over her shoulder to see if there was a chair placed for her, whereas Queen Victoria sat down with no such precaution, knowing that her chair would be where she wanted it. The difference was that the Empress had occupied her revolutionary throne for five years, but Queen Victoria was to the manner born. Great in dignity, the Queen was not less great in courtesy. In 1871, when physical distress and public anxiety were weighing heavily upon her, she wrote to an intimate friend in a curious vein of self-reproach: "I wonder what my ladies think of my want of courtesy.

Sometimes I drive out with them for a couple of hours and all the time do not exchange a word with them. I am so taken up with thinking what answers to make to the despatches and letters of the day."

It was symptomatic of the Queen's greatness that the ladies whom she chose as her companions and attendants were women of the highest character and standing. Conspicuous among these was Harriet, Duchess of Sutherland, who might well stand as the typical Great Lady of the Victorian Age. She combined all the glittering gifts of fortune—beauty, birth, rank ; the command of vast wealth, the headship of a great family, and the friendship of crowned heads—with a single-minded love of truth and freedom such as seldom flourishes in the atmosphere of Courts. She was granddaughter of the famous Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, whose ode to William Tell elicited the ardent admiration of the young and republican Coleridge—

O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure !
Whence learned you that heroic measure ?

And the same question might well have been addressed to Duchess Harriet when she assembled all the fashionable world of London at Stafford House (called for the nonce "Aunt Harriet's Cabin") in order that Mrs. Beecher-Stowe might plead the cause of the slave, or when, ten years later, she rendered public and enthusiastic homage to the red-shirted hero who had emancipated Italy.

A Great Lady, in the highest and purest sense of

the word "great," was Georgina, Lady Mount-Temple. She had, besides an almost faultless beauty, an extraordinary dignity of presence and bearing, which was the outward and visible sign of a nature singularly noble and elevated. Ruskin tells us in *Præterita* that he first caught sight of her at Rome in 1840, "eminent in her grace above a stunted group" of sightseers; beautiful with "a beauty which I had only yet dreamed of as possible—statuesque severity with womanly sweetness joined." All those gifts and graces were enhanced in her by a sympathy with suffering so keen that she never could be happy in a world where others were miserable. To her all the cruelties and tyrannies that are done under the sun, all the pangs and tears of a groaning and travailing creation, were—

Desperate tides of the whole great world's anguish,
Forced through the channels of a single heart.

Her whole life was a long crusade against cruelty. Persecuted men and injured women and tortured animals alike found in her a saviour and a friend.

I turn now to a Great Lady of another type—surely one of the greatest whom our age has seen, and yet almost forgotten by a busy and ungrateful age. Do children in well-regulated homes now, as in my youth, make words with ivory letters on Sunday evenings? If so, let them to-morrow write this sentence—"Flit on, cheering angel,"—and then, breaking it up, let them re-form the letters into "Florence Nightingale." It is the happiest of ana-

grams. Henry Kingsley, describing the wounded trooper in the hospital at Scutari, says that when he began to recover "there was one effect of light and shadow which he always lay awake to see—a faint flickering on the walls and roof which came slowly nearer till a light was in his eye. We all know what that was. It has been described twenty times. I can believe the story of the dying man kissing the shadow on the wall. When Miss Nightingale and her lamp are forgotten, it will be time to consider whether one would prefer to turn Turk or Mormon." Only just lately Lord Stanmore, in his *Life of Sidney Herbert*, has told us once again how Miss Nightingale, in the bloom of youth and beauty, went out in obedience to the call of patriotic duty to the inconceivably difficult and laborious task of superintending the military hospitals in the Crimea. "There is but one person in England," wrote Sidney Herbert, "that I know of who would be capable of organizing and superintending such a scheme"—and that was the graceful and accomplished young lady whom he knew as his friend and neighbour in her pretty Hampshire home. The task which awaited her might have appalled a more experienced organizer. "We have four miles of beds," she wrote, "and not eighteen inches apart." A critical observer said "her nerve is equal to her good sense." One of the Sisters of Mercy who served under her bore this testimony: "At this period there were no night-nurses, but Miss Nightingale, lamp in hand, each night traversed

alone the four miles of beds. How many lives this lady has been the means of saving during these rounds by calling medical aid or by administering little alleviations is fully known only to herself and to the Unseen who watches our steps. She was particularly skilled in the art of soothing; her gentle, sympathizing voice and manner always appeared to refresh the sufferer. It was generally far into the night before she again reached her quarters."

When Miss Nightingale returned from the Crimea, she had "built herself an everlasting fame," but she had sacrificed all that to common natures makes life worth living. For years she has lain an imprisoned invalid on the couch which she can never quit, but, as Gautier says, "*la prison est une excellente chaire pour prêcher une idée nouvelle.*" The "new idea" which Miss Nightingale has preached from her prison-pulpit, and to which she has devoted all her mental and moral activities, is the idea of humane, rational, and organized sick-nursing. Never was a worthier cause more heroically served, and, if the King saw fit to confer his new Order of Merit on Florence Nightingale, he would be honouring the Order at least as much as the recipient.

VI

MOTHERS IN ISRAEL

THIS subject is suggested to me by the announcement of a new book on an old theme, *The Countess of Huntingdon and her Circle*. The title set me thinking of a remarkable series of women (quite as noteworthy in their way as the "Political Wives" or the "Great Ladies") who have played conspicuous parts in the religious life of modern England.

At the head of the list stands Lady Huntingdon, raised to that eminence not merely by her social station and contemporary fame, but by a solid and enduring achievement. Alone of the Mothers in Israel who fall within my ken, she established a new Church, and so gave her name a prominent place in religious history. Lady Selina Shirley, daughter and co-heiress of the second Earl Ferrers, was born in 1707, and married in 1728 to Theophilus, ninth Earl of Huntingdon. She was left a widow in 1746, and died in 1791. In her husband's lifetime he and she had fallen under the influence of John Wesley, and, when she was left a widow, she immediately cast in her lot with the despised and persecuted "people

called Methodists." For the remainder of her life, all she had—rank, wealth, social influence, and organizing skill—was devoted to the work of reviving Evangelical religion in an age of spiritual torpor. In this cause she spared nothing. It was estimated that from first to last she spent £100,000 in the service of religion. "She would give the last gown off her back" was the testimony of one of her fellow-workers. In different quarters of London, and at such centres as Bath and Bristol and Brighton, she built chapels, which she retained under her own control. Availing herself of her right as a peeress, she appointed Evangelical clergymen to be her chaplains, and sent them hither and thither to supply the pulpits of her unlicensed tabernacles. At Spa Fields, in Clerkenwell, she purchased the "Rotunda," a disused place of public entertainment, and made it the metropolitan church of her Connexion, living herself, with her lady coadjutors, in a modest residence adjoining the chapel. At Trevecca, in South Wales, she founded a college for training impecunious young men who desired to be preachers, and personally superintended their discipline, their work, and their theological education. The theology of Trevecca (afterwards transferred to Cheshunt) was of a severe type. Lady Huntingdon was a resolute Calvinist, and in 1770, when the Wesleyan Conference adopted the doctrine of universal redemption, she severed her connexion with the Wesleyan Society. Henceforward Whitefield was her principal coadjutor, but

neither he nor any of the other able men who were associated with her ever disputed her supremacy. Her position in the religious world was unique. She induced some of the most intellectual as well as the most fashionable people of the day to attend her chapels. She rebuked the Archbishop of Canterbury for letting his wife give "routs" at Lambeth Palace; and when the Archbishop (rather naturally) demurred to her jurisdiction, she went straight to the King, who backed the reforming Countess and reprimanded the recalcitrant Prelate. Her personal influence over her followers was extraordinarily strong. Fletcher of Madeley sat at her feet "like Paul at the feet of Gamaliel." Rowland Hill wrote, in the enthusiasm of youth, "Had I twenty bodies, I would like nineteen to run about for her." A contemporary observer likened Lady Huntingdon among her preachers to "a good archbishop surrounded by his chaplains." She personally directed all their evangelistic journeys and labours, and put them through their paces before she let them perform in public. With regard to one of her students she wrote, "The first time I made him expound, expecting little from him, I sate over against him" to see what stuff he was made of—a terrible ordeal for a budding preacher. To another, just beginning his ministry: "Now, Wren, I charge you to be faithful and to deliver a faithful message to all the congregations. I will stand by you." To a third, who shrank in diffidence from attempting his first sermon, she presented a Bible, and then, thrusting

him out into the street, said, "The Lord be with you—do the best you can." The stream of modern theology, even in Evangelical quarters, has set so unmistakably in the anti-Calvinist direction that it was impossible for "Lady Huntingdon's Connexion" to retain much numerical importance; but the Connexion still endures, and keeps alive the name of a noteworthy "Mother in Israel."

A technical dispute with the Bishop of London had driven Lady Huntingdon to register her chapels as Dissenting places of worship and her preachers as Dissenting ministers, but many of her closest friends continued unmoved in the communion of the Church of England. Such were Lady Mary Fitzgerald (daughter of the first Lord Bristol), who died in 1813, in her ninety-fourth year; Mrs. Fletcher, the saintly wife of Fletcher of Madeley; Diana, Baroness Barham, who did an apostle's work in South Wales, and who gave four sons to the Evangelical ministry of the English Church. Eminent above her compeers both in literary skill and social popularity was Hannah More, who, born in 1745, lived to give an improving book to the infant William Gladstone and so laid the foundation of his great library. Her *Thoughts on the Manners of the Great*, her *Strictures on Female Education*, and her *Village Politics* ran into innumerable editions; she was consulted on spiritual concerns by people in all classes of society, from princesses to dairymaids; and was the intimate friend of Garrick, Johnson, and Horace Walpole. Bishop Porteus of

London recommended her writings in a Charge to his diocese, and another quaintly described her as "one of the most truly evangelical divines of any age not apostolic."

Before Hannah More died, the leadership of the Evangelical party among women in high station had devolved by common consent on Charlotte Duchess of Beaufort. Unlike Hannah More, the Duchess had no literary skill, but her resolute character, her great position, and her wide circle of relationships spread her influence far and wide. There are people still living who can remember her, trumpet in hand, drinking in the eloquence of Henry Blunt in the Parish Church of Upper Chelsea. And, when she died, the great Lord Shaftesbury wrote in his diary, September 8, 1854: "The dear old Duchess of Beaufort has been gathered to her fathers, full of years and God's grace. At eighty-four years of age, and with such hope, nay assurance, of a blessed eternity, who can weep for her departure? Called by God to be His instrument for the revival of the truth in the upper classes of society, she became a 'mother in Israel,' and I entertain for her the deepest reverence and affection." Among women of rank and fortune who in less conspicuous ways served the same cause were Frances Lady Southampton; Susan Lady Cholmondeley; and Frances Lady Gainsborough, whose special charge it was to promote the interests of Evangelical religion in the Royal Household. After staying at Windsor on a Sunday in February 1845, Samuel Wilberforce,

afterwards Bishop, noted in his diary: "Chess evening, which I regret—not that my own conscience offended at it one jot, but that capable of misconstruction, and not unlikely to receive it from Lady G——."

Outside the limits of the English Church, this remarkable succession of gifted and devoted women was steadily maintained. Elizabeth Duchess of Gordon, the incompatible daughter-in-law of the frivolous Duchess Jane, held a position in the Free Church of Scotland which in the case of a man would be called patriarchal. Theodosia, Lady Powerscourt, was a principal light among the "Plymouth Brethren" in Ireland. Louisa Duchess of Northumberland devoted all the powers of a masculine intelligence and all the resources of rank and wealth to the propagation of the principles generally, though incorrectly, called Irvingite.

All these ladies, and many more whom I could name if space permitted, laboured in the world; but some of the most remarkable "Mothers in Israel" whom I have ever known were trained in the cloister. Tennyson knew what he was writing about when he said of Guinevere that, "for the power of ministration in her," she "was chosen Abbess." Conspicuous among the cloistered ladies of the Victorian age was Priscilla Lydia Sellon, foundress, in 1848, of the first English Sisterhood of Mercy, and Superior of it till her death in 1876. "Pusey's Miss Sellon—y" was the popular nickname for the "Abbey" at Devonport; and not

only Dr. Pusey, but everyone, male or female, who was brought into contact with her, felt in Miss Sellon a force of will and a power of adapting means to ends which stamped her as a pioneer and a ruler. She laid, amidst unbounded reproach and misrepresentation, the foundations on which others built, perhaps more wisely but certainly not more bravely. Among these it is obvious to recall Mrs. Monsell, the first Superior of Clewer; Miss Byron, of the Sisterhood of All Saints; Miss Benett, of the Sisters of Bethany; Miss Hughes, of the Convent at Oxford; and "Mother Kate," who carried one of the most famous names of Cheshire into the lifelong service of the poor at the Priory of Haggerston.

All these were "Mothers in Israel," and so, in a rather different sense, were the ladies who served religion with their pen. Generations of Evangelical families have delighted in the genial humour and fluent style of that inexhaustible authoress who wrote the *Life of Hedley Vicars*. Miss Sewell, of Bonchurch, and Miss Skene, of Oxford, were similarly esteemed in the Tractarian homes; and I have heard it maintained by those whose judgment was worth having that no author ever affected the heart and life of English girlhood so profoundly as Charlotte Yonge.

But "Mothers in Israel" there have been who played no conspicuous part in public life; who did not found new churches, or organize communities, or write controversial treatises, or instil theology through

the medium of romance. They influenced their generation, not by precept but by example, in the sanctities and graces of the Christian home. Such conspicuously was Mrs. Gladstone. "Her full nature spent itself in channels which had no great name upon the earth, but the effect of her being on those around her was incalculably diffusive."

VII

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

"WHAT relation is Archdeacon Wilberforce to the old slave-dealer?" This question was put to me, in all good faith, by an intelligent curate who had just begun to study the history of the Oxford Movement, and had become entangled among the Wilberforces—Robert Isaac, Henry, and Samuel. *The old slave-dealer*. I italicize the words, because they so aptly illustrate the brevity and the fallaciousness of fame. It is possible that even in Manchester there are some who may for a moment forget the significance of March 25, 1907; but some, at any rate, will recognize it as the centenary of the "old slave-dealer's" immortal triumph. On March 25, 1807, the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave-Trade received the Royal Assent, and the foulest blot was erased from the scutcheon of Christian England.

Political and social history contains, I think, no more interesting or more attractive figure than that of William Wilberforce, miscalled by my curate "the old slave-dealer," but venerated throughout the Christian world as the apostle and evangelist of Emancipation.

The peculiar interest of Wilberforce's character, as also of his career, lies in the curious contrast between what he actually was and what one would imagine the protagonist in so stern a conflict to have been. Although from his earliest manhood he lived laborious days, and often laborious nights as well, in searching the saddest and darkest passages of human life, no shadow of austerity or gloom ever dimmed the radiance of his disposition. Madame de Staël declared she had always heard that Wilberforce was the most religious man in England, but that she found him also the most agreeable. "No one," said one of his contemporaries, "touched life at so many points." "He always has the charm of youth," said another. In Cambridge days his high spirits and hospitable temper, his mirthful conversation, and his after-supper songs, made him equally popular as host and as guest. In maturer life the beauty of his speaking voice made him "the nightingale of the House of Commons," and his running fire of humorous comment enlivened the tedium of the dulllest debates. His opponents, unaccustomed, as it would seem, to the sight of a cheerful Christian, actually reproached him with the unpardonable sin of "religious facetiousness," thereby giving him scope for his famous retort that there was no reason why a Christian should not be gay, and that an irreligious man did not necessarily escape being dull. From the year 1784, when first, by a formal and deliberate act of the will, he consecrated himself to the service of God and humanity, till his death in 1833, he lived a

life of anxious care and exhausting labour, fighting his way through the most violent opposition, and holding his own victoriously on conspicuous battle-fields, as one of the Members for undivided Yorkshire and leader of a militant and unpopular party in the House of Commons. Such a career would have seemed to demand a vast equipment of physical strength, but that great gift was not bestowed on William Wilberforce. His "puny form and delicate health" made him the laughing-stock, till he became the darling, of the electors of Hull. It seemed as if "a breath would blow him away" when first he faced the electors on the Hustings at York. The infirmities of age overtook him before their time, and he was crippled, partly hunch-backed, and nearly blind long before his activities came to a close. He has his place, secure and immovable, in the ranks of that gallant host who, in spite of pain and weariness and physical infirmity, "out of weakness were made strong," and, through the sacrifice of ease and comfort, "put to flight the armies of the aliens."

Too often in the history of social reform, and in the careers of profoundly religious men, one sees enormous masses of praiseworthy effort and generous zeal thrown away and wasted because the reformers refused to recognize the realities of human nature, and lacked the wisdom which, as Ecclesiastes says, is "profitable to direct." Conspicuously the reverse was the case of William Wilberforce. He was (in the same sense as that in which Mr. Gladstone was) a

Mystic, believing that he was divinely called to a special work, and looking at every turn for divine guidance and divine help. Believing intensely in the power of spiritual forces, he carried his belief into the practice of political life. "He trusted to a Prayer Meeting to carry a division in the House of Commons." But he never forgot that God works out His purposes through human agencies and material means. By his personal influence over Pitt, he converted the omnipotent and unapproachable Minister to the unfashionable cause of Emancipation. He agitated the country from Cornwall to Caithness. He enlisted all the resources of the platform and the press. He turned his house into the official headquarters of the movement. Above all, he cultivated to its full perfection his natural gift of oratory, and made a special study of the temper and predilections of the House of Commons, through which alone he could hope to secure the victory of the cause. Pitt and Burke had vied with each other in praise of his eloquence. Brougham described it as "of the highest order, persuasive and pathetic in an eminent degree." To this natural gift he added tact, skill, and knowledge of his audience. Canning said: "If there is anyone who thoroughly understands the tactics of debate and knows exactly what will carry the House along with him, it is my Honourable Friend."

The friendship between Wilberforce and Pitt is one of those friendships which have helped to make history. It began at Cambridge, and was cemented

by the common interests of Parliamentary life. For several sessions they inhabited neighbouring houses at Wimbledon. "Hundreds of times," said Wilberforce in old age, "I have roused Pitt out of bed in the morning and conversed with him while he was dressing. In fact, I was the depository of his most confidential thoughts." It was under the oak in Holwood Park, still a sacred memento of a humanitarian crusade, that Wilberforce elicited from Pitt the all-important promise that henceforward he would support the Abolition of the Slave-Trade. So close an intimacy with so powerful a Minister could scarcely fail to fill a young politician's mind with the thought of political office and all its distinctions and rewards. Characteristic and memorable was Wilberforce's resolve to take nothing and to do nothing which could possibly interfere with the cause to which he had devoted his life. He told Pitt, with all possible solemnity and deliberation, that he would never accept either Ministerial office or hereditary honours. He would suffer nothing to curtail his activities or imperil his independence. The friendship between the two men was enriched by one pathetic episode. When Wilberforce first fell under the domination of that Evangelical creed which governed the rest of his life, he felt it a sacred duty of friendship to bring Pitt, if it might be, to the same views of truth as he had himself adopted. Long, affectionate, and carefully reasoned letters passed between the two friends, and these were followed by

a private conference, in which Wilberforce urged with all his persuasive powers the need for a consecrated life. The attempt was unsuccessful; but surely, as Lord Rosebery says, "it was a memorable episode, this heart-searching of the young Saint and the young Minister. They went their different ways, each following his high ideal in the way that seemed best to him. And so it went on to the end, Wilberforce ever hoping to renew the sacred conversation."

Another attractive feature of Wilberforce's career is that he began life a rich man, spent fifty years in the unrewarded service of humanity, and died poor. This contrasts agreeably with the achievements of professional philanthropy, which too often leaves £100,000 behind it, even though some portion of that sum may be bequeathed to charity. Mr. Gladstone, when a dead millionaire was extolled in his hearing for having left a large sum for benevolent uses, replied with emphasis—"Thank him for nothing! He was obliged to leave it. He couldn't take it with him." Wilberforce did not wait for this posthumous self-sacrifice. When he attained the age of twenty-one, he came into possession of the wealth which his forefathers had accumulated in business. He spent it with prodigal liberality on the main purpose of his life, on a great array of philanthropic causes, and on a host of not always deserving friends. It is recorded, I think, that one to whom he had lent £100 repaid him with a turkey. By this and similar transactions his income was so much

reduced that in his last years he could not afford to keep a home over his head, but spent the evening of his days a welcome and honoured guest at the Parsonage Houses of his clerical sons. One of those sons, Samuel, Bishop of Oxford, speaking in the House of Lords in 1853, paid to his father's memory a tribute both eloquent and just: "I deem it to be my greatest boast to be sprung from one who, gifted with the vastest opportunities, with the friendship, the closest friendship, of England's greatest Prime Minister, the highest powers, the most commanding social position, used them all for no personal aggrandisement, and died a poor commoner—a poorer man than when he entered public life, seeing every one of his contemporaries raised to wealth and hereditary honours, leaving to his children no high rank or dignity, according to the notions of this world, but bequeathing to them the perilous inheritance of a name venerated by the Christian world."

VIII

EASTER

THE late Mr Joseph Henry Shorthouse is commonly, and justly, regarded as a man of one book. Even though we may not set great store on the philosophy of *John Inglesant*, and may perceive its culture to be rather thin, still the book holds its own as an historical novel of great force and charm; and by it, as far as we can judge, Mr Shorthouse's memory will be kept alive. But though he was a man of one book, he was also a man of two essays; one his persuasive defence of *The Agnostic at Church*, the other his Introduction to George Herbert's *Temple*—a most delicate and suggestive piece of writing, which supplies me with an apt "foreword" for to-day's meditations. "The invitation to write this Introduction came to me, with a surprising appropriateness, upon Easter Day—upon an Easter morning such as even an English spring can sometimes afford, a morning bright with sunshine and cherry-blossom and flowers. The primrose, the daffodil, and the polyanthus were around the windows, and the fresh green of the woodlands tinted the distance, from which the church

bells were faintly heard — a season chosen by God for festival, who knows how many thousand years ago!" Those words, and indeed the whole essay of which they form a part, have the true feeling of Easter in them—a feeling partly spiritual and partly physical. They breathe "the chill sweet morning air of spring," borne to us from "the country places which God made and not man."

Easter. I have chosen my title with liturgical precision; for, though the "Day of Days" is over, it has its octave; and not the day only, but the whole season till Ascension Day, is Easter. This week, however, in which I write, is Easter pre-eminently. We are informed by a learned writer that "the extension of the Easter festival through seven days is mentioned by St. Chrysostom in one of his Easter homilies, by St. Augustine in one of his Epistles, and in the Code of Theodosius, which directed a cessation of labour during the whole of the week." This last is a very human touch, and Theodosius must have been a most beneficent legislator—a kind of Saint John Lubbock born before his time. Certainly, in weather such as we are now enjoying, "the common heart of man" responds with alacrity to the command of Theodosius, and most willingly accepts a cessation of labour during the whole of Easter week. While I commend "the weather which we are now enjoying," I rejoice with trembling, for I am well aware that, before these words see the light, we may all be huddled up in furs and comforters, cowering over the

club-fire, or shivering in that cold and cruel sunshine of the spring which has been aptly likened to the gleam of a silver plate on a coffin.

But, like the wise though calumniated Epicureans, let us make the most of the passing hour, and yield ourselves to the full fascination of the most delicious Easter which ever woke the world from her winter sleep. London is emptier than I have ever known it at this time of year. The "millions who do not count" have, of course, returned from their brief outing, but what are called the "residential quarters" of the town look as much deserted as though we were in August. The passion for holiday-making in springtime is a root-instinct of human nature. Chaucer knew all about it; and my friend James Payn amplified Chaucer's line into a passage of fascinating prose: "When the streets are filled with light white-awned carts, full of blooming flowers which make sweet the London air, then it is, even more than in the autumn, that one longs to flee from bricks and mortar into the country. Moreover (which is surely a charm), one should not do it. Business demands one's presence in the metropolis; there is no legitimate vacation at this period for persons of our quality. Hence it is the very time for a holiday. I don't say that one should take one's wife and family—far from it; they will go to the seaside, doubtless, in due time; but the epoch of which we speak is essentially masculine and (if I may say so) bachelory. Let everyone have to be back again in town by a

certain day and hour, upon business of the most serious importance, and let nobody get back when he intended, and let that business be postponed. A certain recklessness of consequences is indispensable, if we are really to enjoy the cool, soft, river airs and all the sweetness of the land in spring."

I linger with delight over these words, so excellently appropriate to this, the truly festive, season. At a moment when all the croakers and the pessimists and the sensation-mongers are moaning over the increase of pleasure-seeking and holiday-making as a sign of national degeneracy, I hail that increase as one of the best signs of the times. There is not the slightest fear that Englishmen, as a mass, will ever work too little. As it is, they work too much. The dignity and the beauty of Labour disappear when, under the pressure of competition, life becomes an incessant and mechanical grind. Unbroken idleness is no doubt a degrading lot, but unbroken toil is not much better. "The labour of life is cheered by the song of life"—the saying is Mr. Gladstone's, himself the most strenuous of workers. The more frequent the oases in the desert, the more cheerfully we can pursue our pilgrimage across it. Most rightly did the Church—not merely the Church of England but the Catholic Church of all time and all lands—stud her sacred Kalendar with Holydays which were also Holidays. Most foolishly—even criminally—did Puritanism abridge the long-sanctioned festivities which had kept England fresh and young. Much sancti-

monious wrath was poured upon the early Tractarians, who encouraged the labourers to play cricket on the village green on Sunday afternoons. Much clumsy ridicule was flung at chivalrous Tories like Lord John Manners, who pleaded for the restoration of National Holidays. But Time was on their side. The *Zeitgeist* decided for them and against the Puritans. To-day all social and economic and political considerations are making in the direction of shorter toil and better holidays, "more music and less care." Even the Church, though rightly jealous of the special use for which Sunday was ordained, is beginning to see that her duty and her wisdom lie in encouraging the love of honest pleasure. "Cakes and Ale" represented the mediæval conception of a holiday; "Beer and Skittles" was a more modern formula for the same idea. In these latter days we have improved on both these combinations; but, though we are learning to take our pleasure in more refined forms, we must remember that every well-ordered scheme of enjoyment must provide for the physical part of human nature. "Through pleasures and palaces though we may roam"—though the "pleasures" be romantic rambles by the rushing Derwent, though the "palaces" be Hardwicke or Haddon or Chatsworth,—we cannot get a living, let alone a holiday, out of landscapes and picture-galleries. Nature claims a place for the slice from the joint and the pint of bitter beer, or the more temperate delicacies of a farmhouse tea. No doubt

the joys of the mind are higher than those of the body; but, if they are so high as to despise their lowlier companions, they will make havoc of a holiday.

When we are thinking about the material accompaniments of a holiday it is inevitable to note and to rejoice in the wonderful diminution of drunkenness. Cardinal Newman wrote, with his delicate irony, about "the observance which was paid, not without creature comforts, to the Sacred Night" of Christmas. Had he been writing in the earlier days of Bank Holidays, he might certainly have included the observance which was paid, "not without creature comforts," to such days as Good Friday and Easter Monday. Dr. Liddon, who often introduced into his sermons, as spoken, sarcastic touches which were not reproduced in print, once said when preaching under the Dome on the first Sunday in August: "If St. Paul could rise from the grave and traverse the streets of London on the afternoon of a wet Bank Holiday, he would, I think, find occasion to modify his statement that 'they that be drunken are drunken in the night.'" To-day the ground of that implied reproach is almost, if not altogether, removed. That great crusade against national intemperance of which, I suppose, Lancashire was the home, has won some signal victories, and none more remarkable than the change which it has wrought in the spirit and manner of our quarterly holidays. The holiday-makers have learnt self-respect. They have emancipated themselves from

the hoary superstition that in order to be merry it is necessary to be drunk. Every year they show themselves more and more proficient in the science of using to the best advantage their too scanty opportunities of rest and recreation.

IX

EXHIBITIONS

MAY is the month of Exhibitions. I omit for the moment all reference to the annual display of the Royal Academy, which, like a true Londoner, I shall probably visit on some quiet morning towards the latter end of July. Just now it is engrossed by Country Cousins, eagerly enquiring which is the picture of the year, and even painfully anxious lest they should admire the wrong one. But, while the great men of the artistic world—the Poynters, the Sargents, the Orchardsons—hold their high Midsummer pomps at Burlington House, a crowd of smaller fry begin to show signs of emulous life. Each dabbler in aquarelle, each manipulator of pastel, as he gazes on the vast expanses of kingly purple and fox-hunting scarlet and episcopal lawn which adorn, or at any rate conceal, the walls of the Royal Academy, murmurs to himself that he too is an artist.

Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph and partake the gale?

Meanwhile, and pending the arrival of the bright day when he shall see his masterpiece six inches from the floor in the least-frequented corner of Burlington House, the Minor Artist starts an Exhibition of his own. He hires a frowsy little back-room in Bond Street or the purlieus of St. James's, and there, with the assistance of a clouded skylight and a dusty background of crimson cloth, he offers his wares to an admiring but unpurchasing public. Now is the heyday of the crazy Impressionist, who, as Ruskin said, flings his paint-pot in our faces and demands payment for the outrage. Now the fervent disciple of Rossetti and Burne-Jones conceals his anatomical monstrosities in chitons of sad chrome or pensive madder. Now is the time for the Young Lady who has devoted five years to the kailyairds of Scotland or the croquet-grounds of Upper Tooting, or who, emulating the more cheerful effects of French "*genre*," has given us that winsome series of "The Night-Nurseries of All Nations." Not far off is the gifted amateur, who paints not for money (which perhaps is just as well) but for love, and exhibits his works in the hope of raising a few pounds for the restoration of the Parish Church or a new bagatelle-board for the Temperance Club. The amateur and his methods were depicted for us fifty years ago by a master-hand, and the lapse of time has wrought no modification in his artistic style: "He painted scenes in the hunting-field, or Arab horsemen whom he had met on the great, flat, sandy plains beyond

Cairo, or brown-faced boys, or bright Italian peasant girls—all sorts of pleasant objects under cloudless skies of ultra-marine, with streaks of orange and vermilion to represent the sunset. He was not a great painter, but his pictures were altogether of the order which unsophisticated people admire and call 'pretty.'” Ah! well do I know that gifted amateur, and many an hour have I spent in the contemplation of his—or her—works since first in the dawning spring my fancy lightly turned to thoughts of Exhibitions.

There remains yet another form of art, which just now is attracting a good deal of attention in London; but here it behoves the critic to walk more warily. I am thinking of Caricature, and the enraged Caricaturist has a frightful implement of vengeance in his hands. I can lampoon the Academicians to my heart's content, and yet enjoy a perfect immunity from reprisals. However much I may ridicule their exuberant loyalty, their narrow range of subjects, their bondage to convention, their placid satisfaction with commonplace and banality, they cannot, even if they would, avenge themselves; they cannot paint me as a Knight of the Garter, or a Lord Mayor, or a Master of Hounds, or a blandly-smiling Bishop; they cannot introduce me as a boatman on the Thames at Medmenham or a shepherd-boy on Salisbury Plain. I cannot, by any violence of art, be dragged into such a composition as “Daddy's Boots,” or “Her First Ball,” or “Granny's Last Prayer.” But, when you

come to deal with a Caricaturist, the case is widely different; and, if he only can find one out, one may see oneself gibbeted in a loathsome cartoon. It is therefore in a reverent and submissive spirit that I approach the consideration of Mr. Max Beerbohm's caricatures, now on view at the Carfax Gallery. Timidly and, as it were, *sotto voce*, I would suggest that something more than an abnormal prolongation of leg is needed in order to make an amusing caricature of Mr. Balfour—something more than a six-foot wall of collar to suggest Lord Althorp. I am restrained from further depreciation, not merely by craven fear of consequences, but by the sincere conviction that most of Mr. Beerbohm's caricatures are extremely good. The style varies, from a few characteristic lines and dabs, such as those which exactly body forth Lord Tweedmouth and Lord Ribblesdale, to a highly-finished group of several figures, such as the three alien financiers in Angel Court, or Mr. Haldane "exercising the Ministerial prerogative" of joining a dinner-party in morning clothes. Some of these pictures are, as good caricatures should always be, scarcely caricatures and almost perfect likenesses. There is a dreary gentleman who told a young lady at dinner that the only subject in which he was interested was Criminal Law; Mr. Beerbohm has hit him "talking enthusiastically," and toying the while with a miniature gallows. The accomplished Mr. Henry James, immersed in a London fog and scarcely able to see his hand before his face, is touched with

equal dexterity by pencil and pen: "It was not without something of a shock that he, in this to him so very congenial atmosphere, now perceived that a vision of the hand which he had, at a venture, held up within an inch or so of his face was adumbrated with an almost awful clarity." William Shakespeare, as he appeared when writing a sonnet, is set in an agreeable framework of Elizabethan flirtation; and Mr. Hilaire Belloc is seen denouncing the errors of Geneva to an inert but jovial-looking mass which proves on closer inspection to embody Mr. Gilbert Chesterton. For pure humour there is no picture in the collection so enjoyable as the young Ethiopian in cap and gown entering the University of Oxford on the Rhodes Foundation; unless, indeed, it be the Curator of the Tate Gallery explaining Mr. Rothenstein's "Jews Mourning in a Synagogue" to the receptive intelligence of Mr. Alfred de Rothschild. I should be disposed to doubt whether Lord Grimthorpe, Lord Savile, or Mr. Claude Lowther will ever again knowingly place themselves within pencil-shot of Mr. Beerbohm; and sure I am that, if ever he is proposed for membership of the "New English Arts Club," he will be abundantly blackballed. So far as one can judge of an artist's sympathies by his work, I should conceive that Mr. Beerbohm is no admirer of the British Aristocracy. No one with a well-regulated mind could conceive of Mr. Charles Whibley lecturing Mr. Birrell on "the uselessness of teaching anything whatsoever, sacred or profane, to the

children of the non-aristocratic class." When Lord de Grey critically appraises a Dresden Shepherdess, our Old Nobility is not seen at its best. Lord Howard de Walden cuts a poor figure as he quails under the eloquence of Mr. George Moore. "Lord Savile taking a walk," apparently in the neighbourhood of Rufford Abbey, looks, as he is, the monarch of all he surveys. But even Savilian grandeur and Lyttonian grace hide their diminished heads before the majestic approach of "Milor Grimthorpe, qui arrive" at a French hotel, with all the traditional dignity of the English nobleman in Continental surroundings. Mr. Winston Churchill would gaze with unalloyed satisfaction at the counterfeit presentment of Lord Northcliffe; and Lord Beaconsfield himself, with all his iconoclastic contempt for the Order of the Bloody Hand, never drew so typical a Baronet as "Sir Hedworth Williamson approaching the Presence."

Mr Matthew Arnold said of Parody that it is "a vile art," but he had sufficient magnanimity to regard it "with an amused pleasure" when applied in his own case by Mr. H. D. Traill. That is a moral height to which I cannot attain, and before now I have winced pitifully under the satirical handling of the genial "F. C. G." Caricature, like Parody and Burlesque, is only justifiable when it is applied to a base and contemptible original, and even Uriah Heep would have too much self-respect to affix such epithets to himself. But the world con-

tains a good deal of turpitude and even more vulgarity ; and for dealing punitively with those traits of character Mr. Beerbohm's mordant genius peculiarly fits him. Of other caricaturists I may hope to write another day.

X

CARICATURES

LORD BEACONSFIELD, describing a country house which was uninhabitable because uninhabited, gives, as usual, a graphic touch: "There was throughout the drawing-rooms an absence of all those minor articles of ornamental furniture which are the offering of taste to the home we love. There were no books, few flowers, no pet animals, no albums of drawings and sketches, not a print even, except portfolios of H. B.'s caricatures." There is a terrible verisimilitude about those "portfolios of H. B.'s caricatures." They recall the distant days when our juniors had gone to bed and our seniors had settled themselves down to whist, while an unfortunate nondescript, too tall to be treated like a child and too young to be amused like a man, was remitted to a distant table with a book of "views" or portraits, and the soothing assurance that "Charlie"—or Harry, or whatever the name might be—"is always quite happy with a book." It was thus that the present writer first became acquainted with the odious art of Rowlandson and Gillray and their congeners; and, though in

some respects a praiser of past times, he must confess an unmeasured preference for the modern school of caricature. To begin with, the old caricaturists delighted in sheer hideousness. To represent all men with pot-bellies and dropsical calves and bottle-noses, all women with preposterous waists and towering heads and clumsy ankles, is a painfully easy effort of draughtsmanship; and, when the person satirized is someone who died half a century before one was born, all flavour of fun has vanished and the hideousness alone endures. When the infuriated Drill-Sergeant reviles the pavid recruit as "a lopsided caricature of a half-baked militiaman," one feels that he was nurtured in the school of the older caricaturists and knows nothing of the gentler phases of the art. Then, again, old-fashioned caricatures were generally indecent. Mr. Brooke in *Middlemarch* recommended Mr. Casaubon to unbend his mind and try light literature—"Smollett, you know; *Roderick Random*, *Humphrey Clinker*—they are a little broad, but I remember they made me laugh uncommonly. There's a droll bit about a postilion's breeches. We have no such humour now." We may make that phrase our own in reference to caricature, and be thankful that it is so. Enterprising firms which try to reproduce the caricatures of a hundred years ago generally find that they require a considerable amount of re-touching.

It may further be remarked that the old caricaturists, though they revelled in hideousness and

had no notion of delicacy, were still extremely simple. When Sir F. Carruthers Gould draws a gentleman with an eye-glass and an orchid, or with very long legs and a pince-nez, he does not deem it necessary to write underneath "Mr. Chamberlain" or "Mr. Balfour." He relies on the resemblance for the identification. Not so the caricaturists of the reign of George III. When they portrayed Lord Yarmouth (afterwards "the wicked Lord Hertford"), they wrote under the picture, with simple playfulness, "A View of Yarmouth." One might have thought that a portrait of Lord Arthur Hill, brother to Lord Downshire and Member of Parliament for the County Down, would be intelligible without the legend "A. Hill near Downshire"; and Mr. Pitt's insatiable love of port was sufficiently indicated by the counterfeit presentment of a sharp-nosed gentleman emptying a decanter, even though it was not adorned with a sly allusion to "The Bottomless Pitt."

For the more humane, more artistic, and wittier style of caricature with which for the last half-century we have been familiar, we are indebted in great measure to the influence of *Punch*. The men who edited and illustrated *Punch* in 1841 and the years immediately succeeding were old enough to have known the ugliness, the coarseness, and the frequent stupidity of the older caricaturists, and they resolved to redeem their art from the degrading associations which had so long clung to

it. The elder Doyle, disguised as "H. B.," had already set an example of better methods in his "Political Sketches," which began to appear in 1831, "unexaggerated in statement, decorous, and fair." His son, Richard Doyle, who was one of the earliest contributors to *Punch* (and designed its present cover), inherited and improved on his father's style, and with him were associated a band of humourists as genial as John Leech, and of artists as vigorous yet delicate as Sir John Tenniel. The succession has been worthily maintained through a period of sixty-six years, and has sensibly affected the spirit and style of all contemporary caricature. I have spoken of Leech as eminent for humour and Sir John Tenniel for art, but I do not for a moment mean to imply that Leech was not an artist or that Sir John is not a humourist. Each man had in varying share both the gifts which go to make the caricaturist; each had an amenity of temper which kept his art within the limits of good feeling and good taste; and both were supremely happy in the subjects with which contemporary life supplied them. Leech died in 1864, and I suppose that he is more generally remembered by his smaller sketches of domestic scenes, sport, society, and the humours of the street than by his political cartoons. Yet, though his cartoons numbered only some seven hundred as against Sir John Tenniel's two thousand, they comprise one or two which have never been surpassed and will never be forgotten. The most powerful

picture ever produced by *Punch* was "General Février turned Traitor"—the skeleton of Death, in a Russian uniform, laying his icy hand on the heart of the Emperor Nicholas, who at the beginning of the Crimean War had uttered the awful boast that "Russia has two Generals on whom she can always rely—General Janvier and General Février."

In the lighter style which more properly belongs to a comic journal, Leech's masterpiece was the "Boy who chalked up 'No Popery' and ran away." "No man," writes Sir Spencer Walpole, "fills a larger place in caricature than Lord John Russell. The small stature, which testified to the frail body, and the large head, which indicated the capacious intellect, equally assisted the caricaturist. It became gradually customary to pourtray him as a boy or a child." In 1851 the "Papal Aggression," as it was termed, by which the Pope affected to divide England into Roman dioceses, awoke a vehement indignation, and Lord John Russell introduced a Bill forbidding Roman ecclesiastics to assume the titles of these new Sees. The Bill passed into law, but remained a dead letter, for the Government made no attempt to enforce it. "John Leech," says Mr. Stuart Reid, "in a cartoon in *Punch* caught the droll aspect of the situation with even more than his customary skill. In later life Lord John Russell said to a friend, "Do you remember a cartoon in *Punch* where I was represented as a little boy chalking 'No Popery' on Cardinal Wiseman's door and running away? Well, that was very

severe, and did my Government a great deal of harm ; but I was so convinced that it was not maliciously meant that I sent for John Leech and asked him what I could do for him. He said that he should like a nomination for his son to the Charterhouse, and I gave it to him. That is how I used my patronage'”—a worthy boast.

Another subject, not less valuable from the caricaturist's point of view than the diminutive Lord John, was the earlier Disraeli, with his Semitic profile, his exuberant curls, and his general air of fantastic levity. "The question is," he said at Oxford in 1862, "Is Man an Ape or an Angel? Now, I am on the side of the Angels." And, so saying, he delivered himself into the hands of Sir John Tenniel, whose portrait of the Tory leader "Dressing for an Oxford Bal Masqué," in a starry-spangled robe with arch-angelic wings, is a really perfect instance of pictorial satire. Another masterpiece which has always remained in my mental vision belongs to 1875, the year following the great Conservative reaction under Disraeli. In that year the Sultan of Zanzibar visited our shores, and Sir John Tenniel depicted the Prime Minister in the act of bidding farewell to the sable prince: "Now that your Highness has seen the blessings of Freedom, I trust we may rely upon your strenuous help in putting down Slavery?"

"Ah! Sheikh Ben Dizzy, *Conservative Party very strong in Zanzibar.*"

In cases where physical peculiarities were not so

strongly marked as in Lord Russell and Lord Beaconsfield, the cartoonists of *Punch* used to rely on some badge or emblem for the identification of the subject. Thus Lord Palmerston was always represented with a straw in his mouth, though no one ever knew why, and John Bright in his earlier years was expressed by a single eye-glass (which he never wore). By a similar convention, the British Workman, whether he was demanding the franchise or denouncing the loafers or protesting against Local Veto, always wore a square paper cap, which went out about the same time as crinolines; while the Irish Peasant, whom *Punch* always disliked, invariably wore a tail coat and a tall hat, and carried, at the best a blackthorn, at the worst a gun.

For thirty years or so *Punch* monopolized the art of political caricature. The monopoly was invaded by the establishment of *Vanity Fair*, which made a step in advance by the use of colour. These coloured cartoons varied immensely in artistic merit; some were merely hideous exaggerations in the style of the earlier caricaturists; some — such as Bishop Wilberforce with clasped hands and circumambient smile, Lord Beaconsfield in his astrachan coat walking arm-in-arm with Lord Rowton, and Mr. Gladstone in evening dress with a red rose in his button-hole—were consummate portraits and valuable contributions to political history.

In more recent years Sir F. Carruthers Gould has given us in the *Westminster Gazette* a masterly

series of political sketches. Perhaps he is a little too much obsessed by Mr. Chamberlain, but we must admit that the monocle was an irresistible temptation. I cherish among my most valued possessions some pen-and-ink caricatures by the late Sir Frank Lockwood, as good in pure outline as anything that I know. There is a young cartoonist in Manchester whose work has, I see, been denounced by a clergyman as "irreverent," but seems to me full of quite legitimate fun; and I reserve for my final word of eulogy the anonymous author of a picture called "Denominational Teaching in Provided Schools: How it may be harmoniously arranged," which appeared in the *Daily Graphic* of November 5, 1906. I have never seen a more remarkable combination of humour and common sense.

XI

A CHIVALROUS EPISODE

AMONG the announcements of forthcoming books I notice one which has for me a very special interest. Mr. George Macaulay Trevelyan, who so worthily maintains a historical name and tradition, is publishing an account of Garibaldi's defence of the Roman Republic; and it is rumoured that this will be the first instalment of a biographical history, or historic biography, which has long been overdue.

To men who, like myself, were boys in the 'sixties, Garibaldi has always seemed the one transcendently heroic figure on the European stage (I say nothing of India or America). The red-shirted General, who had begun life as a cabin-boy and had ended by liberating Italy, threw our bestarred and bewhiskered Field Marshals into a very unromantic shade. We heard stolid soldiers, trained in more conventional schools of war, declare with surly wonder that Garibaldi only had to stamp his foot and armed men sprang out of the ground. We heard that, according to Disraeli, not exactly a champion of revolution, Garibaldi's was the only name which

could at any moment collect ten thousand men at any given point in Italy.

We knew by report his earlier achievements in the cause of freedom ; his hair-breadth 'scapes, his supernatural victories ; the romantic glamour which followed his fortunes both in war and in love. We ourselves remembered the crowning triumph of 1860, which made Italy no longer "a geographical expression," but a people and a State. We had seen the passionate enthusiasm which attended his visit to England in 1864 and made all merely regal progresses by comparison dull and insignificant. We knew, at least by hearsay, the rather craven plots and wire-pullings by which he was forced out of the country, leaving unvisited the great Northern towns, where thousands of liberty-loving Englishmen had prepared for him a welcome worthy of his fame. All this we knew, and, when we were young, it set our veins on fire. But gradually the clouds of disappointment and disillusion began to gather round our hero. He passed out of sight and out of mind long before he passed out of life. Yet some true hearts there were which never forgot their early loyalty, and believed in their hero only more passionately as his star seemed to wane and his sun to set. I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting some verses which convey much more powerfully than any prose of mine could do the devotion which he inspired in all youthful lovers of Freedom :—

There is One in Heaven, Garibaldi,
Whose Face we have not seen ;
But thinner to you than to us lies
The veil that hangs between.

He has made you for His own work,
He has kept you spotless through ;
And you know better than we can
What He has called you to do.

Some day you will go forth again,
And He will go with you ;
If we would but look up, to us
The Heavens would open too !

Now, courage ! Has his cause with him
Gone down in this overthrow ?
Are works and prayers thrown backwards,
And all in vain ? Oh, no !
Those eyes that see the farthest
Declare that it is not so.

Full often, we know already,
When the arm of the Conqueror fails,
When the wise have sunk despairing,
The Martyr at last prevails.

So our hopes are with you, whether
Your fortunes rise or fall ;
For—you are Garibaldi,
And God is over all !

Rough verses, perhaps, and barely metrical, showing no trace of the laborious file ; but all on fire with that ardent faith and loyalty which later life finds it so difficult to revive.

All this, and much more of surpassing interest, Mr. Trevelyan's work, when completed, will recall ; but the particular episode of which I was thinking

when I wrote the words at the head of this chapter will not fall within the scope of his first volume. It belongs to a date later by twelve years. The Roman Republic fell, in spite of Garibaldi's masterly defence, in 1849. It was in 1860 that he rallied his immortal "Thousand" for the vindication of Italian Unity and Freedom. Then it was that liberty-loving England caught fire; and week by week, as the gallant tale of successful insurrection unfolded itself—as we read the heroic doings at Calatafimi, and Palermo, and Milazzo, and Reggio,—the flame spread till it caught every young Englishman who cared for Liberty, and made him an Italian at heart. When Garibaldi paid his glowing tribute to the devotion of the undisciplined and half-armed lads who made barriers of their own bodies to protect him from the Bourbon bullets, every English boy longed to wear the Red Shirt. "A handful of filibusters, without gold lace or epaulettes, had routed several thousand of the Bourbons' best troops, artillery and all." When this was the hero's own account of the troops which he commanded, when he proclaimed that victory was not yet assured and appealed for aid in the name of Freedom and Humanity, young enthusiasm found its vent in action. Early in the autumn of 1860 an advertisement appeared simultaneously in several newspapers intimating that a party of Englishmen about to visit Italy were making arrangements for the journey at a given address in the Strand, and would be glad to make acquaintance with others who would like

to join the excursion. It was further intimated that, as the country which was to be visited was much infested by brigands and marauders, it was expedient for every member of the party to carry firearms.

The response to this cryptic appeal was instantaneous and astonishing. Within a few days, a thousand of these intending tourists had reported themselves at the rendezvous. They represented literally every class. The highest orders of the peerage, the great county families, the professional, mercantile, and trading sections, the Universities, the Services, the Clubs—none was unrepresented in the English Legion. A list of names and occupations which lies before me as I write shows the most curious diversities of station, occupation, and even nationality ; for all the refugees who had sought refuge in London from Continental despotisms claimed their places alongside the English volunteers in this bold dash for Italian freedom. The Volunteer movement, which had sprung into existence eighteen months before, had supplied the majority of our men with the rudiments of military training ; and several officers of high distinction, such as General Dunne, Colonel Chambers, and Captain Forbes, accepted provisional appointments under “Garibaldi’s Englishman”—Colonel Peard, who was in command of the Legion. Day by day the business of recruiting, enrolling, drilling, arming, and equipping went steadily forward, and, although such preparations for an attack on a recognized Government were clearly inconsistent

with the comity of nations, no attempt was made to interfere with them. Why not? The reason was guessed at the time, and now is known. Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister, and Italian freedom had no stauncher friend. A young kinsman of his, fresh from Cambridge, determined to enlist, and made no secret of his intention. Palmerston was delighted; it was just the sort of boyish lark, of plucky adventure, which appealed to his septuagenarian youth. He said in effect: "Of course you can go to Italy if you choose. There is nothing to stop you. I must know nothing about your ultimate designs. I hope you will have a pleasant trip, and, if a few letters of introduction to my Italian friends can do you any good, they are quite at your service." So the Legion set out; and, though embarrassed by insufficient discipline, hindered by the most vexatious delays, and, it was whispered, secretly betrayed by spies who professed to be friends, it reached Italy in time to see active service under the walls of Capua. It was, in every sense, a motley crew, and its brief spell of actual warfare was a curious episode in modern history. The eldest son of an English duke was fighting in the ranks, shoulder to shoulder with shopmen and clerks, till Garibaldi discovered him and gave him the rank of Captain, which he bore at home. One of the most beautiful women in Europe, the Countess della Torre, rode at the head of the regiment, in the Red Shirt which was the Garibaldian uniform, as tranquil under fire as the General himself.

Signora Mario, who as Jessie White, an English girl of twenty, had consecrated herself to the Italian cause, was in charge of the ambulance; and the near kinsmen of two Cabinet Ministers kept friends in England informed of the doings of the Legion.

It was a vivid but a brief experience, and those who had part in it were soon scattered to the four winds of heaven. Some few of them still survive, and it is curious to compare the different motives which impelled them to the enterprise. With some it was sheer love of fighting; with some it was the boyish spirit of adventure. Some older men deliberately embraced an opportunity of jeopardizing their lives for the cause of human freedom. But, for those who fell under the spell of the Liberator's personal influence, the whole Italian creed and inspiration were summed up in one word—GARIBALDI. The poet whom I quoted above—designated by the great Mazzini himself as the Laureate of the Roman Republic—gave forcible expression to the almost superstitious reverence with which the hero was regarded by those who had once seen his smile and grasped his hand:—

Do we understand you, Garibaldi?

Truly, I think not so.

We rejoice in you, we would die for you,

Where you go we would go;

Near you, we feel nearer Heaven—

Is not that enough to know?

Can the lesser contain the greater?

For ever the law says "No."

XII

GARIBALDI

MY correspondence shows me that Garibaldi is not yet forgotten. Evidently there are plenty of people still alive who can recall the inspiration of his name and are glad to have their youthful enthusiasm fanned again into a flame. And what pleases me even more is that there are some of the younger generation to whom the events of 1848 and 1860 must seem prehistoric, and who yet are anxious to learn more of a cause and a person that moved their parents so profoundly. "Parents" I say advisedly; not fathers only, for English women were among the most enthusiastic of the hero's admirers—from the great ladies who threw open their palaces to do him honour, to the poor seamstresses who spent their scanty leisure in stitching Red Shirts for his ragged troops.

1848 was, as everyone knows, the year of Revolution. Thrones went down with a crash all over Europe, and ours was thought by some observers to be none too safe. But Rome was the centre of the world's regard, for there, on a stage made illustrious

by the greatest events of secular history, men saw, translated into concrete fact, the vision which lovers of liberty so long had cherished—a pure and absolute self-government, of the people, by the people, and for the people. Though the great experiment ended in failure, humiliation, and disaster, it never faded from the hearts of those who had regarded it as the beginning of the Golden Age; and when, five years later, Garibaldi, no longer Commander-in-Chief of the Republican Army, but merely Captain of a Merchant-Trader, paid his first visit to English shores, all the sturdy Liberalism of the North gathered at Newcastle to render homage to a hero and to the cause, in which, though baffled, Liberals still believed.

Then followed one of those mysterious disappearances, and periods of apparent inaction, which so curiously diversified Garibaldi's career. He had adopted for his motto the saying of a South American General—" *La guerra es la verdadera vida del hombre*"—"War is the true life of man"; and, in recording this part of his career, he quietly wrote: "The interval between my arrival at Genoa in May 1854, and my departure from Caprera in February 1859, presents no points of interest. It was spent partly at sea, partly in cultivating a small property I had purchased in the island of Caprera." February 1859 was the date at which, in obedience to the summons of Cavour, Garibaldi went to Turin, and found himself plunged into a seething mass of political complications for which he had neither

aptitude nor liking. Mazzini in his prophet-soul had conceived the great vision of Italian Unity and Freedom. Cavour's teeming brain was busied with those arts of statecraft which were to give the vision a substantial form. Garibaldi was neither prophet nor statesman. He was only a soldier, though an inspired one, and his business was to serve the cause with his irresistible sword. So we are led on to the great events of 1860, which I briefly recapitulated in my last chapter, and to that crowning hour of Garibaldi's life when he laid down his dictatorship at the feet of Victor Emmanuel and saluted him as King of a free and united Italy. In later years Garibaldi wrote: "In an epoch such as that of 1860 in Southern Italy a man truly lives; he lives a life that is useful to the multitude. This is the true life of the soul."

Few men have ever stood in a morally grander position than Garibaldi when, after the battle of Caserta Vecchia on the 2nd of October 1860, he sheathed his victorious sword. He had accomplished a people's desire and had rendered a conspicuous service to freedom and humanity, and all the while had maintained a disinterestedness and an integrity which stopped the mouths of the most inveterate gainsayers. And yet he had not wholly accomplished the task which, as some of his followers believed, destiny had assigned to him. He had not restored the Roman Republic—nay, rather he had retarded it by creating the Italian Kingdom,—and he had not

regained possession of the Eternal City. This incompleteness of his appointed task stirred the restless and fighting blood in Garibaldi's veins. And in his distress and perplexity he had few sympathizers. The Mazzinian idealists were angry with him because, as they thought, he had compromised the Republican cause; and, on the other hand, the new-made King was well contented with things as they were, and had no mind for further adventures, even though Rome itself might be the prize. Thus sorely bestead by conflicting forces, both of which he had served with royal self-surrender, Garibaldi followed his own straight and narrow path of patriotic duty. To deliver Rome from clerical government and to make her the capital of United Italy had been the prime object of his life. And now, when he thought that he saw the way plain before him, he conferred not with flesh and blood, but struck straight out for "Rome or Death." In July 1862 he issued his appeal for Volunteers, and promptly King Victor Emmanuel issued a counter-proclamation against the intractable hero who had placed him on his throne. But, nothing daunted, on went Garibaldi, gathering volunteers right and left, and heading always straight for Rome; till on the 29th of August, on the wooded crown of Aspromonte, he found himself face to face with the Royal Army of Italy, despatched to check his insurrectionary advance. "The moment," he said in after years, "was a terrible one for me, forced as I was to choose whether we would lay down our

arms like sheep or stain ourselves with the blood of our brothers. The soldiers of the Monarchy, or, to speak more accurately, their leaders, were troubled by no such scruples." The issue was not long in doubt. Before midday the Garibaldian host was scattered to the four winds and Garibaldi a prisoner of war, with an Italian bullet in his hip and another in his ankle.

This fratricidal—nay, parricidal—tragedy roused the keenest sympathy in England. A surgeon of the highest reputation was sent, by public subscription, to the hero's sick-bed; and an English girl of twenty, who had volunteered for service in the Garibaldian Corps, burst into memorable utterance:—

High on Aspromonte flashed the Red Shirts early,
Up in the midst of them the glory of his face :
Low on Aspromonte, ere the day was over,
He was down and bleeding, bound in helpless case.
Hands of brothers poured that crimson ; nevermore
Tears can wash it from the holy Tricolor.

Courts of Law to judge the rebel and to try him,
Prison-portion for the criminal found due,
Haste officious to disown him and deny him—

This is Royal recompense for service over-true.

It was, I suppose, this feeling that a hero had been basely misused by a Government which owed its very existence to his self-devotion that inspired the extraordinary welcome accorded to Garibaldi when he returned to England in 1864. Last week I gave my own boyish impressions of it; to-day let us have Mr. Morley's maturer testimony:—

"The populace took the thing into their own hands. London has seldom beheld a spectacle more extraordinary or more moving. The hero in the red shirt and blue-grey cloak, long associated in the popular mind with so many thrilling stories of which they had been told, drove from the railway at Vauxhall to Stafford House, the noblest of the private palaces of the capital, amid vast continuous multitudes, blocking roadways, filling windows, lining every parapet and roof with eager gazers. For five hours Garibaldi passed on, amid tumultuous waves of passionate curiosity, delight, enthusiasm. And this more than regal entry was the arrival, not of some loved prince or triumphant captain of our own, but of a foreigner and the deliverer of a foreign people. Some were drawn by his daring as a fighter and by the picturesque figure as of a hero of antique mould; many by sight of the sworn foe of Giant Pope; but what fired the hearts of most was the thought of him as the soldier who bore the sword for human freedom."

But, after all this enthusiasm and triumph and splendour, Garibaldi disappeared as suddenly as he had come. The precise account of his disappearance has never been ascertained, though various versions have from time to time been put forward by Mr. Morley, Sir James Stansfeld, Lord Malmesbury, and other chroniclers. Monsignor Manning (not yet Cardinal) wrote to Rome: "Her Majesty acted as a Queen and a woman in putting a stop to all this seditious tomfoolery about Garibaldi." It is pleasant

to set against this Mr. Gladstone's testimony: "October 1, 1864. Dined with H.M. She spoke good-humouredly of Garibaldi."

My space will only suffice for one more episode in Garibaldi's career. In the autumn of 1867 he began his last attempt to destroy the Temporal Sovereignty of the Pope. I say "his last attempt," for the consummation of 1870 was the act of fate rather than of Garibaldi. The brief but brilliant campaign of 1867, which ended so disastrously at Mentana on the 3rd of November, has been described with picturesque effect (and, curiously enough, with apparent sympathy) by Lord Beaconsfield in *Lothair*. But the most remarkable feature of that campaign is that, though the cause, the leader, and the issues involved were precisely the same as those of 1860 and 1862, England manifested not the slightest interest or sympathy. Yet, when I say this, I must qualify my statement with a single exception. Garibaldi, enumerating the Italian heroes who fought under his command in this ill-starred campaign, adds the name of "John Scholey, of London, found wounded at the station of Monterotondo, and massacred by the Papal Zouaves." Signora White Mario tells us that she once gave Garibaldi "some flowers from John Scholey's grave—a brave young Englishman wounded at Mentana, who died in the Roman hospital and is buried there." Touched by sympathy for the fate of this solitary and forgotten hero—for such one fancies him to have been,—I lately made enquiries about his burial-place, and

received this information: "John Scholey was wounded at Mentana on the 2nd November 1867, and he died in a temporary Military Hospital, on the 28th of the same month. He was buried in the Protestant Cemetery at Rome on the 30th. The grave was not bought in perpetuity, and in 1902 the remains were exhumed and buried in the Ossarium in the cemetery. Over his grave was a very little tablet with the following inscription :—

JOHN SCHOLEY
Died November 28th, 1867."

A brief and unadorned epitaph indeed; and even that has vanished; and the bones which it guarded are mingled with the common dust. But one has one's friends and favourites in the spirit-world, and among them I reckon this unknown Englishman who gave his young life for human freedom.

XIII

MAZZINI

A FRIEND, who was at the centre of excitement in the stirring times of which I have been writing, reproaches me with having "forgotten Mazzini." My excuse must be that I was recalled to these Italian enthusiasms by Mr. Trevelyan's book, and that the memories of Garibaldi which that book awoke were more than enough to occupy the space at my command. Yet Mr. Trevelyan has a good deal to tell us about Mazzini as well as about Garibaldi, and I can rebut my friend's reproach without departing too widely from the theme and the occasion. After describing the hero's earlier exploits as a guerilla chief in South America, and showing how they helped to train him for his life's work in Italy, Mr. Trevelyan, in one of those antithetical sentences which remind us that he is not only of the lineage but of the school of Macaulay, thus introduces us to Mazzini: "While Garibaldi was being fashioned into a hero on the breezy uplands of Brazil, the more painful making of a saint had for eleven years been in process amid the squalid and fog-obscured sur-

roundings of a London lodging-house." London had harboured and trained its Saint, when his passionate pleadings for Truth, Freedom, and the Brotherhood of Nations had made the despot-ridden Continent of Europe too hot to hold him. In any attempt to revive the memory of the Liberator, the Saint must hold a conspicuous place, for it was from him that the Liberator derived his inspiration. When, in 1864, Garibaldi landed on English soil to receive that extraordinary tribute of public homage which I described in my last chapter, his thoughts went back, through "the tumult and the shouting," to the distant days when, as a young merchant-seaman, he had first seen Mazzini at Marseilles.

"There is a man," he said, "here amongst us who has rendered the greatest services to our country, and to the cause of freedom. When I was a youth, and had only aspirations towards good, I sought for one able to act as the guide and counsellor of my youthful years. I sought such a guide, as one who is athirst seeks the water-spring. I found this man. He alone watched when all around slept ; he alone kept and fed the sacred flame. This man is Joseph Mazzini ; he is my friend and teacher." It was a gallant tribute from the crowned and belauded conqueror to the proscribed and hunted refugee, who had first seen the vision of a free and united Italy and had foretold the glories of the coming time. Yet the generous spirit which prompted it, and even the sacred interests of a common cause, could not long maintain that

harmony between the two men which each desired and which the cause demanded. Some truly sad pages in a glorious history narrate their mutual suspicions and misunderstandings, their idle recriminations, their unseemly strifes. The severance of Garibaldi from Mazzini illustrates, for the hundredth time, the incompatibility of the Doer and the Dreamer—the man of action and the man of vision. Both loved Italy and freedom supremely ; both were ready to die for the cause : but each must serve it as each thought best, and neither could think charitably of methods or policies which clashed with his own convictions.

I have spoken in two succeeding chapters about the Man of Action ; let me say a word to-day about the Man of Vision, who dreamed, when all the world seemed dark and cruel, of Immortality and Brotherhood and Love to God and Man.

Rose-red Republic of Christ !
So long in coming to pass ;
So long that our hearts are weary,
And our faith grows cold, alas !
For this the nations are yearning
In their fever and complaint ;
And for this the silent workers
In their patience do not faint.

Thus wrote, in 1862, a young and ardent poet whose eyes Mazzini had opened till they could see the vision on which his own soul subsisted. Here is the disciple's tribute to the master :—

And for thirty years one Prophet,
Rejected, despised, abhorr'd,

Has been crying in the wilderness,
"Make straight the way of the Lord!"

But another kingdom is coming,
Whose dawn is in the sky,
And they who watch on the mountains
Have a vision that it is nigh;
And over the arch is written,
In letters Orient-gilt,
The perfect law of liberty—
"Love, and do what thou wilt."

Such was a disciple's epitome of the Mazzinian doctrine. Perhaps it does not surprise us so much in these latter days, when we have read *The Religious Creed of a Democrat* and have seen the compiler of it raised to the Anglican episcopate;¹ but it must have sounded strange in the ears of a generation which regarded Mazzini only as the advocate of tyrannicide, the most reckless and restless conspirator in Europe; which hunted him not only from his own country, but from every shore where despotism ruled; which set a price on his head and plotted his assassination in the streets of London; and even—to the eternal disgrace of our free government—violated his correspondence in order to incriminate his friends.

During the eventful years of which I have lately written, Garibaldi loomed large in the public eye. There he stood, "on the top of golden hours," victorious, splendid, heroic, as notable and as familiar a figure as Louis Napoleon or Pio Nono, only infinitely

¹ C. W. Stubbs, Bishop of Truro.

more attractive. But all the while there was silently moving through the less conspicuous scenes of English and European life the elusive figure of Joseph Mazzini—the man of mystery and apparition, the prophet, the dreamer, the schemer; disseminating far and wide his new gospel of “God and the People”; vanishing from observation only to reappear at some fresh centre of insurrectionary movement, and then resuming, in the dull security of some shabby London suburb, his labours of brain and pen for the Cause which absorbed his life. For every thousand who saw and acclaimed Garibaldi in 1864, there were probably not ten who ever set eyes on Mazzini, though Garibaldi was here for three weeks and Mazzini for thirty years. Yet for the few who ever knew “the Prophet” personally he remained one of the ineffaceable memories of a lifetime. Lord Beaconsfield described his “brooding brow”; Margaret Fuller called his face “sweet and calm but full of a fiery purpose”; the author of *The Disciples* felt the “summer lightning of his smile.” His biographer, Mr. Bolton King, speaks of his “high, cliff-like forehead,” his “eyes that looked like flames,” and his “lips like a woman’s in their expression of spotless purity.”

So much for the man. What was his message? Let his biographer reply:—“Supremely he achieved the harmony of life, which he never wearied of extolling. He was politician, philosopher, religious reformer, literary critic, and every side of his life

completes the others in a perfect synthesis. At the centre of it all, controlling, illuminating, energizing, stands his religious faith; to him religion was the inspiring principle of brotherhood and social service." Mazzini's religion was, primarily and essentially, the recognition of God as "the author of all existence, the living, absolute thought, of which our world is a ray and the universe an incarnation." "God," he said, "exists. We ought not, do not, want to prove it. God lives in our conscience, in the conscience of Humanity, in the Universe around us. Our conscience calls to Him in our most solemn moments of sorrow and joy. He who would deny God under a starry night, by the graves of his dearest ones, or before the martyr's scaffold, is a very wretched or a very guilty man." He rejected Deism as a "sordid creed," which "relegates God to Heaven and ignores His ever-operating life in the world." Born and educated in the Catholic Church, he was alienated from the religion of his forefathers by the monstrous tyranny and misrule which he saw and felt in professedly Catholic countries. Yet he retained a profound and loving reverence for the Divine Founder of Christianity, as Teacher, Deliverer, and Martyr. "The Cross," he said, "is the symbol of the one true, immortal virtue, the sacrifice of self for others." On the death of a Christian friend, he wrote: "Any faith, even though imperfect and spoilt by false doctrine, comforts the pillow of the dying better than the dry, thin, gloomy travesty of Science which is called

nowadays Free Thought or Rationalism." In 1849, when, as Triumvir, he was ruling the Roman Republic with an absolute sway, he insisted that some Confessional-Boxes which had been dragged from the churches to make barricades should be restored to their places; and this for the characteristic reason that through them some message of comfort and hope had been breathed into the ears of the poor and helpless. "Characteristic," I say, for Mazzini's religion, consisting essentially in the recognition of God, expressed itself and energized in the passionate love of Humanity. "From the general formula that men call Religion there issues a rule of education, a basis of human brotherhood, a policy, a social economy." Religion has close relations with Politics, for "it touches all questions of the franchise, of the condition of the masses, of nationality." And, above all, Religion implies Social Reform. "All Humanity repeats, under different formulas and in different degrees, the words of the Prayer of Christendom—*Thy Kingdom come on Earth, as it is in Heaven.*"

From such a conception of Religion there naturally flowed the most vehement detestation of cruelty and insolence and tyranny; so Religion made Mazzini a prophet of Revolution. In politics it made him a Republican, for those "equal rights to freedom and happiness," in which the founders of the American Constitution believed, could only be secured by the self-governing system of Republicanism. In Mazzini's idea of Religion, believing was never divorced from

doing, and he ranks supreme among the ethical teachers of his time in his insistence on the sacredness of Duty. A man's duty to himself, to his family, to the State, and to the race, was the fourfold foundation on which he built, and taught his followers to build, the edifice of Conduct. And yet once again, Religion, according to Mazzini, meant an absolute faith in Progress. God, he said, "slowly, progressively, makes man Divine." Where God is leading, there can be no stagnation, no arrested development, no retrogression. The march of Humanity is always onward and upward, and its goal is that identification with the Eternal Life of God, which we call Immortality.

In a sordid and unromantic age, we must perforce look back with mingled envy and regret to the more heroic days when Our Lady of Liberty had Mazzini to preach her gospel and Garibaldi to fight her battles.

XIV

OLNEY

MY Italian preoccupations of the last three weeks have distracted me from a patriotic duty. A select company of devout Newtonians and Cowperians have been on pious pilgrimage to the unexciting town of Olney. The indefatigable Mr Thomas Wright, whose devotion is quaintly divided between William Cowper and Walter Pater, organized the sober revel. An Evangelical Bishop discoursed with eloquence and unction about the place of Olney in religious literature, and the selected orators of the National School recited "Glorious Things" and "John Gilpin." Though separated in bodily presence from the pilgrims at their commemorative tea-table, I yet was with them in spirit—

My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss I feel—I feel it all.

For I, too, spring from those South Midlands where Newton preached his stern gospel and Cowper lived his cheerless and secluded life. I was nurtured on the banks of "Ouse's silent tide." I have threaded

the recesses of Yardley Chase; have picnicked in the shades of Weston Underwood, with its "close-woven arches of limes"; and have made the perilous journey through flooded fields to that Clifton which, but for Cowper, would never have been discovered even by the Royal Geographical Society. In brief, I was reared in the nurture and admonition of Olney, and I rejoice in an opportunity of doing homage to the genius of the place.

Another day I may have something to say about John Newton. To-day I am concerned with William Cowper, and in the first place let us pay him the common civility of pronouncing his name properly. When I heard a leading member of the last Government so pronouncing it as to make the *Cow* rhyme with *Sow*, I felt that the vaunted alliance between Conservatism and Culture was indeed "a fond thing vainly invented." Whatever else about Cowper is debatable—whether we condemn him as a namby-pamby weaver of ten-syllabled platitudes about teacups and sofas, piping bullfinches, tame hares, and sagacious spaniels, or whether we esteem him a humourist of the first water and the most virile champion of freedom in a despot-ridden age—let us at any rate be quite clear about the fact that his name was pronounced as though it were spelt Cooper. He was a cadet of the great family which came to an end two years ago by the death of the last Earl Cowper; and the most remarkable point in his genealogy was the fact that his grandfather, Spencer

Cowper, was tried for his life on a charge of murdering his sweetheart and yet lived to be a judge. His pedigree was his only patrimony, unless we attribute to his ancestors the bad health, bad nerves, and bad eyesight which poisoned and enfeebled his whole life. The one bright spot in his cheerless childhood was his mother's tender love, and that was withdrawn by death when he was six years old.

Oh that those lips had language ! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.

From the safeguards and comforts of home, the wretched child was sent to Westminster—probably the roughest school in England at the roughest time, where, as a junior, he “did not dare to raise his eyes above the shoe-buckle of the elder boys,” and where he was nearly frightened out of his susceptible wits by a gravedigger who threw a skull at him as he was crossing St Margaret's Churchyard after dark. “Vinny Bourne,” the accomplished usher, made him an excellent scholar, and his old Head Master, Dr Nicoll, took laudable pains to prepare him for Confirmation; but the general impression left by the school upon his mind is recorded, with painful candour, in “Tirocinium” :—

Would you your son should be a sot or dunce,
Lascivious, headstrong, or all three at once,
Train him in public with a mob of boys,
Childish in mischief only and in noise,
Else of a mannish growth, and five in ten,
In infidelity and lewdness men.

At eighteen Cowper left this undesirable company,

and then, first as a solicitor's clerk and afterwards as a student of the Inner Temple, he "rambled," to use his own phrase, "from the thorny road of his austere patroness Jurisprudence, into the primrose paths of literature and poetry." In other words, he abandoned all attempts to make a living out of his profession, although he knew that by doing so he was in all probability renouncing the hope of marriage. But those were the good old days of jobbery, connexion, and "influence," and even the junior members of important families were not commonly left to starve. So, in his thirty-first year, Cowper was appointed Reading Clerk in the House of Lords, and might have spent the remainder of his life in a well-paid office, which, if not actually a sinecure, was certainly not laborious. But here his wretched nerves were his undoing. "They," he wrote, "whose spirits are formed like mine, to whom a public exhibition of themselves is mortal poison, may have some idea of the horrors of my situation; others can have none."

So the office was resigned, but not before the mere prospect of hearing his own voice in a public assemblage had driven the neurotic Cowper into the first of those mental paroxysms which devastated his life. It lasted from December 1763 to July 1764; and then, realizing, almost too completely, his utter unfitness for the pursuits of ordinary citizenship, he plunged into that profound seclusion in which the remainder of his days was spent. The complete and final severance from London was not uncongenial to

his natural tastes. His native place was the pretty town of Berkhamstead, under the Chiltern Hills, and in old age he wrote: "There was neither tree, nor gate, nor stile in all that country to which I did not feel a relation. . . . I sighed a long adieu to fields and woods from which I once thought I should never be parted, and was at no time so sensible of their beauties as just when I left them all behind me, to return no more." The country to which Cowper retreated, when he finally said good-bye to the busy world, had little in common with the chalky uplands, heathy commons, and groves of beech which diversify his native Hertfordshire. There is not in all England a more monotonous and uninspiring landscape than that wide tract of level grass-land which is watered by the Ouse and the Nene. It is not an ugly country; it is too richly green and too well timbered to admit of that derogatory epithet; but it is tame and featureless to the last degree, and in winter's mists and rains it is profoundly melancholy. No country that I know, unless it be the adjacent Fenland of Cambridgeshire, seems so well calculated to intensify depression and to transmute low spirits into morbid gloom. But in different parts of this country, first at Huntingdon, then at Olney, and later at Weston Underwood, a perverse fate decreed that Cowper, who more than any other human being needed cheerful and exhilarating influences, should make his permanent abode.

The residence at Huntingdon lasted only two

years, amply sufficient to satisfy most people's appetite; and then Cowper moved to Olney, half town, half village, of which it may be said without offence that, though neat and clean and eminently respectable, it is perhaps the dullest place in the United Kingdom. Twenty years later he moved to the beautiful but lonely hamlet of Weston Underwood, where, under the protecting wing of the Catholic Throckmortons, the Roman religion has held its own from the Reformation to the present day. Huntingdon and Weston were the beginning and the end; the central and creative part of Cowper's life was spent at Olney. It is difficult to imagine a more monotonous existence. Here was a man in the prime of life, with imperfect health, shattered nerves, and exiguous income; constantly threatened and frequently overwhelmed by paroxysms of religious melancholy; with no resources but books, tame animals, and gentle walks when the weather was not too hot or when the flood had not carried away the bridge; with no companions but some devout ladies old enough to be his mother, and a Calvinistic clergyman whose pictures of Hell-fire were enough to drive a sane man mad—this was Cowper from 1767 to 1786; and during that period and amid those circumstances, he permanently enriched English literature with the best letters which the language contains; with a buoyant humour out of which the lapse of a century has not taken the sparkle; with satirical sketches of life and character as vivid as

Pope or Walpole ever drew; with the manliest protests against tyranny, misgovernment, and social oppression; and with devotional poetry in which all English Christians, without distinction of party, recognize the true language of the pilgrim-soul. Surely there never was so strange a contrast between the circumstances and the performance; never did human genius rise so triumphantly superior to uncongenial and obstructive surroundings.

Perhaps there is no sadder verse in the Bible than that which tells us that "the clouds return after the rain"; and there is nothing more pathetic than the fact that Cowper's high genius and pure soul were overclouded at the end, as they had been at the beginning, by the thick darkness of spiritual despair. The last poem which he ever wrote—the exquisite but most gloomy "Castaway"—is in substance the epitome of his own ill-starred life:—

No voice divine the storm allayed,
No light propitious shone,
When, snatched from all effectual aid,
We perished, each alone;
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.

XV

THE CURATE OF OLNEY

"THERE is scarcely anything which takes so strong a hold upon people as Religion in Metre—hymns or poems on doctrinal subjects. Everyone who has had experience among the English poor knows the influence of Wesley's Hymns and the Olney Collection. Less than moderate literary excellence, a very tame versification, indeed often the simple recurrence of a rhyme is sufficient; the spell seems to lie in that. Catholics even are said to be sometimes found poring with a devout and unsuspecting delight over the verses of the Olney Hymns, which the author himself can remember acting like a spell upon him for years, strong enough to be for long a counter-influence to very grave convictions." So wrote in 1849 Frederick William Faber, who had four years previously joined the Church of Rome, and was then composing a book of popular hymns for his fellow-religionists. "It seems," he added, "in every way desirable that Catholics should have a hymn-book *for reading* which should contain the mysteries of the faith in easy verse, and different states of heart and conscience

depicted with the same unadorned simplicity, for example, as the 'O for a closer walk with God' of the Olney Hymns."

The Olney Collection of Hymns was published in 1779. At first it was designed for use in Olney Church and at the prayer-meetings with which the pious energy of John Newton and William Cowper supplemented the regular ministrations of the Parish Church. But very quickly the book emerged from parochial boundaries into general acceptance and usefulness; and now there is scarcely a hymn-book in the world which does not contain "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," "Hark, my soul!" and "Glorious things of thee are spoken"; though "God moves in a mysterious way" and "There is a fountain fill'd with blood" have perished out of congregational use. Of these Olney Hymns, 68 were written by Cowper, and, as one might expect, they are the most delicate and the most literary compositions in the book; but the remaining 280 were the work of Newton, and in their rugged and almost boisterous force they are strongly reminiscent of the man and his career.

After a youth spent in unimaginable hardships and debaucheries, he narrowly escaped death by shipwreck. The deliverance was followed, as it would seem instantaneously, by a moral renovation which made him, in the fullest sense of the apostolic phrase, *nova creatura*. His own account of the change thus wrought in his character and life is given in the vigorous verses which begin :—

In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight
And stopp'd my wild career.

That the slave-trade was an abomination in the sight of God and man was a truth which had not yet dawned even upon consciences enlightened by Evangelical religion; and Newton, after his shipwreck and his conversion, went back for a time to the vile business to which his youth had been sacrificed. But it was not for long. In 1755 he fell under the tremendous influence of George Whitefield, and henceforward his whole life and all his energies were dedicated to the propagation of the truth which he had received. His physical strength, his untiring energy, the vehemence of his declamation, and the stern character of his doctrines, gained him the nickname of "Young Whitefield" from hearers who remembered the older preacher and recalled the famous sermon which "drove ten people mad." At first Newton worked as an independent "gospeller," owing allegiance to no Church or Hierarchy, but speaking as a layman to laymen on topics of paramount concern. Even in later years he sometimes looked back wistfully to the "unchartered freedom" of his earlier ministry. He regarded canonical obedience as a real obligation, and warned younger men who wished to preach in the open air or in unconsecrated buildings that bishops would object, and that bishops had a claim on the obedience of an

ordained man. But in 1764, influenced perhaps by his friend Lord Dartmouth, an Evangelical Churchman, Newton sought and obtained ordination, and was immediately put in sole charge of the parish of Olney, in those days by no means so virtuous or orderly a place as it is to-day. Here his energy and devotion soon wrought a moral revolution; and in 1767 he was reinforced by the arrival of William Cowper—"Sir Cowper," or "The Squire," as the inhabitants called him,—who pitched his tent at Olney for nineteen years, and was Newton's most strenuous supporter and, as far as his strength permitted, coadjutor in the work of spiritual awakening and moral reformation. Two—and, as far as I know, only two—small discords ever disturbed the harmony of this loyal friendship, and both were of Newton's making. In his puritanical abhorrence of all mundane amusement, he rebuked the very mild flavour of secularity which prevades "The Task"; and, in his profound distrust of Rome and all her ways, he reproved his friend for consenting to become the tenant and neighbour of the Roman Catholic Throckmortons at Weston Underwood.

The effect of Newton's influence on Cowper's mind has often been discussed; and, with all the will in the world to be just to Newton, I cannot help feeling that it was unfortunate. The two men were unequally yoked. "Newton was a plain, downright sailor, with nerves of iron and a spirit as robust as his frame; Cowper was a highly nervous, shy, delicate man, a

refined and cultured scholar, who had associated all his life long with the pure and gentle." Newton was by nature confident, dogmatic, and overbearing; Cowper was apprehensive, self-distrustful, and self-reproachful to a point which destroyed his powers of action. Above all else, Newton was compelled by his sense of religious duty to dwell with awful and passionate insistence on the sterner side of the Christian creed; whereas Cowper's self-accusing spirit needed all the light and hope that a buoyant faith could give. The Bishop of Durham, preaching the other day at Olney, extenuated Newton's Calvinism; and, in truth, I cannot see in his writings any trace of that hideous dogma of Predestined Reprobation which wrecked Cowper's reason and darkened his life. But it is beyond doubt that he dwelt with terrible insistence on sin and its consequences; that he was haunted, like Bossuet before him, by the ever-recurring question, *Lord, are there few that be saved?* and that he regarded the huge majority of the human family as finally and irrecoverably lost.

This may have been a very comfortable doctrine for a man of Newton's positive and peremptory temper, who acknowledged that he had sinned hideously and persistently, and was not less assured that on a certain day, March 21, 1748, he had passed, by a miracle of converting grace, out of death and darkness into life and light. But for Cowper, all compact of nerves and self-questionings, doubts and fears, such doctrine was fatal; it intensified his habit

of morbid introspection, and finally destroyed the balance of a mind which had never been accurately poised.

Meanwhile Newton had been transferred, in 1780, from the seclusion of Olney to the conspicuous charge of St Mary Woolnoth, in Lombard Street, where for the next quarter of a century his evangelistic gifts found adequate scope. In his unregenerate days, he had sounded the depths of profanity and evil living; and out of the abundance of his own dark experience he brought the glad tidings of possible renovation to the bond-slaves of sin. As life advanced, his preaching suffered no diminution of fire and vigour; and, even when his bodily strength began to fail under the burden of eighty years, and his memory began to play him tricks, he peremptorily refused to slacken his efforts. His last sermon was preached on the victory of Trafalgar, and in 1807 he died.

The publication of the *Cardiphonia*, a selection from Newton's private correspondence, revealed in him an unsuspected power of dealing tenderly and tactfully with all forms of spiritual perplexity and distress, and it also showed a gentle and attaching side of his character which the morose temper of his theology too often concealed. Thus in 1784 he wrote from his dwelling-place in Hoxton, most depressing of all London's suburbs, to a friend whose happier lot was cast in the country: "O how I long sometimes to spend a day or two among woods and lawns and brooks and hedgerows, to hear the birds sing in the

bushes and to wander among the sheep and lambs, or to stand under the shadow of an old oak upon a hill-top! Thus I lived at Olney; how different is London! But, hush! Olney was the place once; London is the place now. What is the prospect from the finest hill compared with the prospect I have from St Mary's pulpit? What is the singing of birds compared with the singing of our hymn after sermon on a Sunday evening?"

Somehow it is difficult to repress a smile; yet surely this triumph of spiritual perception over material phenomena has been in every age a characteristic of the Saints.

XVI

THE VICAR OF HURSLEY

WHY has not John Keble been included in Messrs. Macmillan's series of "English Men of Letters"? We do not class him with Shakespeare and Milton, but surely he is not below the level of Crabbe and Sydney Smith and Miss Edgeworth. Regarded merely from the literary point of view, *The Christian Year* is at least as considerable an achievement as *Lalla Rookh*; nor are the *Letters of Spiritual Counsel* less interesting than the *Letters of Peter Plymley*. I imagine that the reason why Keble has been excluded from a position rightly his own is that he sometimes wrote hymns, and hymns form a branch of literature with which secular editors and critics are very unwilling to meddle. This unwillingness I understand and even share; partly because of the theological acerbities which hymnody too often suggests, and partly because the critical instinct revolts from the everlasting recurrence of such rhymes as "Heaven" and "given," "faith" and "death," "broad" and "road," which are the stock-in-trade of the pedestrian hymn-writer. And yet, after all,

grievous as the reproach of hymn-writing may be, it attaches itself only in a very slight degree to the memory of John Keble. It is true that he wrote hymns, and admirable ones, but they were comparatively few. The compilers of *The English Hymnal* showed a just desire to include as many as possible of his hymns, yet they give no more than ten, and even that modest number is only attained by including compositions like "There is a book who runs may read," which are not, in the strict sense, hymns. Keble's period of authorship ranged from 1827 to 1866, and during those forty years he produced a vast amount of original prose, both English and Latin, scholarly editions of two English classics and of a friend's autobiography, a translation of the Psalms into English verse, two volumes of original verse, and a great number of isolated poems. So much (and I have summed it concisely) for the quantity of his work: we must now consider its quality. In doing this I leave on one side his prose-writings, partly because they were, in the main, concerned with ecclesiastical controversy, and partly because the space at my command will be quite sufficiently occupied with a criticism of his poetry. Yet, in passing, I may recall a remarkable judgment on the Lectures which he delivered from the Chair of Poetry at Oxford between 1832 and 1841. The title of those Lectures, *De Poeticæ vi Medicæ*—"The healing power of poetry,"—sufficiently indicates their scope. In Keble's mind Poetry was, first and fore-

most, a relief for overcharged emotion; and of the Course of Lectures in which he elaborated that idea, Dean Church, than whom we never had a more competent critic, pronounced that it was "the most original and memorable ever delivered from the Chair of Poetry."

The work which presently made the Poet-Priest's name famous all over the world was, to borrow a phrase of Mr. Gladstone's, not so much a book as an event. In the summer of 1827 two small volumes were published anonymously, bearing the title which has since become a household word wherever English Christianity has spread — *The Christian Year: Thoughts in Verse for the Sundays and Holy Days throughout the Year*. The author never revealed himself, but before long it came to be generally known that he was John Keble, and the quiet Parsonage-house of Hursley, near Winchester, became a kind of sanctuary for perturbed and anxious spirits.

Very few books of the nineteenth century produced an effect so deep and so permanent as that produced by *The Christian Year*. It was, as Cardinal Newman said of it long after he had passed over to another shore, "the most soothing, tranquillizing, subduing work of the day. If poems can be found to enliven in dejection and to comfort in anxiety, to cool the over-sanguine, to refresh the weary, and to awe the worldly; to instil resignation into the impatient and calmness into the fearful and agitated

— they are these.” *The Christian Year*, as expanded in later editions, contains 109 pieces. These had been written at different dates between 1819 and 1827, and, while uniform in tone and tendency, they exhibit the widest differences in form, manner, and artistic merit. Very few of them are hymns in that strict sense of the word which implies a direct address to God, but several end with a verse of that description, so worded as to clinch and epitomize the preceding verses, and all alike are inspired by the most profound and yet childlike devotion. To a gentle and soothing temper and a devotional spirit must be added a third characteristic not less strongly marked. *The Christian Year* shows a most intimate and tender sentiment for Nature, a close acquaintance with her varying moods, and a keen insight into the spiritual significance which underlies her visible phenomena. In this loving sympathy with Nature, Keble is of one heart and one soul with his favourite Wordsworth. The late Professor Shairp, a Wordsworthian of the deepest dye, takes, almost at random, a verse of *The Christian Year* and adds a comment which applies to all Keble’s landscape-painting :—

Deep is the silence as of summer noon,
 When a soft shower
 Will trickle soon,
 A gracious rain, freshening the weary bower—
 O sweetly then far off is heard
 The clear note of some lonely bird.

“Many an ear,” says Shairp, “before Keble’s must

have heard a solitary thrush singing in the distant fields amid the deep hush that preludes the thunder-storm; but no poet before Keble, as far as I know, had seized that impressive image and embalmed it in verse. Not a few such images or aspects of the quiet English landscape will be found reclaimed from the fields for the first time in *The Christian Year*." Limits of space forbid me to quote at large; but, if I were challenged to cite a convincing instance of Keble's skill in poetical landscape-painting, I should quote the verses which describe an English woodland at the end of autumn:—

Red o'er the forest peers the setting sun,
The line of yellow light dies fast away
That crown'd the eastern copse, and chill and dun
Falls on the moor the brief November day.

Now the tir'd hunter winds a parting note,
And Echo bids good night from every glade;
Yet wait a while, and see the calm leaves float,
Each to his rest beneath their parent shade.

It would be out of place to discuss the purely devotional portions of *The Christian Year*. It must suffice to say that some of them reach a very high level of solemn beauty; and that others, written, apparently, under no more constraining inspiration than the need to say something about each service in the Prayer-book, are a good deal less than poetical. As a sample of the former class I would give the poem on "The Holy Communion"; of the latter "The Churching of Women":—

Is there, in bowers of endless spring,
 One known from all the seraph band
 By softer voice, by smile and wing
 More exquisitely bland?

I must confess that, when I encounter that exquisitely bland seraph, I find it difficult to repress a smile. So, I suspect, did Keble himself, for he had a genuine sense of humour; but he deliberately refused to trim and patch "that book," as he contemptuously called his masterpiece, and, on the whole, he was right.

Seven years after *The Christian Year*, came the *Lyra Apostolica*. This famous book of poems from different pens embodied the challenge daringly thrown out by the leaders of the Oxford Movement to the dominant Liberalism of the early 'thirties. It is a book which breathes defiance in every line—defiance of materialism, defiance of worldliness, defiance of the claim of intellect to sit in judgment on supernatural truth. The very structure of the verse, with its rapid motion, its startling metres, its harsh and abrupt transitions, its neglect of suavity and sweetness, marks the *Lyra* as a fighting book, the trumpet-call of an army sworn to conquer or perish. Nothing can be more hopeless than the attempt to embody civil and ecclesiastical polemics in poetic form, and this is what the authors of the *Lyra* set themselves to do. But when, for an instant, they could close their hearts to controversy, they showed that they were poets, or at any rate had poets among them.

"Lead, kindly light" is, of course, one of the glories of our sacred literature; but, on the whole, the writer who emerges from the experiment of the *Lyra* with his poetical reputation least damaged is Keble, and Keble in the *Lyra*, like Keble everywhere, finds his best inspiration in the sights and sounds of nature. That is an exquisite poem in which he apostrophizes Oxford as he saw it from Bagley Wood, surrounded but not submerged by the swollen river:—

The flood is round thee, but thy towers as yet
Are safe, and clear as by a summer's sea
Pierce the calm morning mist, serene and free.

In 1846 Keble published, again anonymously, his *Lyra Innocentium: Thoughts in Verse on Christian Children, their ways and their privileges*. In a book so inspired there could be no room for controversy; and even Dogma loses all its supposed rigidity as the poet blends it with the sweetness and freshness of "the gay, green earth," spring meadows and running waters, or speaks to the child's heart in "The Bird's Nest," "The Starry Heavens," "The Gleaners," and "The Autumn Buds." It has been truly said that "a very good test of the genuineness of a poet's inspiration would seem to be whether his imagery is mainly gathered from the scenes amidst which he has lived or is borrowed from the writings of former poets or other artificial sources." Tried by this test, Keble emerges triumphant. The quiet yet cheerful colouring of Hursley, the pure atmosphere of the Isis and the Cotswolds, are over all he writes.

118 A POCKETFUL OF SIXPENCES

No town-bred poet would have thus described a river :—

The May winds gently lift the willow leaves ;
 Around the rushy point comes weltering slow
The brimming stream ; alternate sinks and heaves
 The lily-bud, where small waves ebb and flow.
 Willowherb and meadowsweet !

XVII

THE CLAPHAM SECT

THE nickname which stands at the head of this chapter was invented, partly in fun and partly in scorn, by Sydney Smith. It soon passed into common speech as the appropriate title of a well-defined and influential community, which made Clapham Common a centre of religious and philanthropic activity. The tone, the habits, and the personal elements of that community have been described for us by many pens—sarcastically by Sydney Smith, with his constant gibes at the “Sanctified Village” and the “patent Christianity” of its inhabitants; picturesquely, and with some fictitious adjuncts, by Thackeray in *The Newcomes*; affectionately by Sir George Trevelyan in his *Life of Lord Macaulay*; with portentous elaboration and solemnity by Sir James Stephen in his *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*, and by the sons of William Wilberforce in their *Life of the Emancipator*.

A *History of London* published in 1808 describes Clapham as “a village about four miles from Westminster Bridge, with many handsome houses, sur-

rounding a Common that commands many pleasant views, and so beautifully planted with trees that it has the appearance of a park." The Common still covers 220 acres, and was then much larger, and many of the houses which surrounded it were built from designs by Wren. Everything pointed to Clapham as a convenient dwelling-place for opulent merchants and bankers who liked fine houses and large gardens and fresh air, and yet were constrained to live within easy reach of their banks and offices. So far, Clapham was not distinguished from other suburbs which had been for at least two centuries the favourite resorts of rich and busy men : what gave it its unique character and secured for it a place in history was the influence of the Parish Church.

John Venn was born in 1759, and became Rector of Clapham in 1792. He was, alike by heredity and by conviction, an Evangelical of the Evangelicals. To all the earnestness and spiritual fervour which had always characterized the Evangelical school he added a cultivated intellect, a calm judgment, and a large fund of sanctified common-sense. Furthermore, he was an eloquent and most persuasive preacher ; and this unusual combination of gifts imparted to his ministry a remarkable power of attraction. The Parish Church of Clapham soon became the centre of a famous circle. When the eighteenth century touched the nineteenth, the villas which surrounded the Common were occupied by such leading laymen as Wilberforce, Stephen, Macaulay, Granville Sharp,

and the Thorntons; followed a little later by Lord Teignmouth, an ex-Governor General of India, and Sir Robert Inglis, who supplanted Peel in the representation of the University of Oxford; Charles Grant, afterwards Lord Glenelg and Secretary for the Colonies, and his brother Sir Robert Grant, afterwards Governor of Bombay. These men, and several others of less note who were associated with them, constituted "The Clapham Sect." They differed widely in social antecedents, in pecuniary fortune, in political opinion, in gifts, occupations, and characteristics; but they were united as one man in religious faith, and in a resulting philanthropy which embraced the world in its operations: "The whole sect looked up to the Rector, John Venn, as to their pastor and spiritual guide." They lived in close and rather exclusive intimacy with each other and with each other's families, and, from their social intercourse, pervaded by a common interest in the highest causes, several enterprises of great pith and moment sprang into life. From Clapham issued the Church Missionary Society, which, started in 1799 by a committee of 25 persons, now evangelizes Africa, East, North, and West, Palestine, Persia, India, and China; carries on its operations in sixty languages, and spends £300,000 a year. Clapham supplied the chairman of the public meeting at which the world-wide Bible Society was founded, and the first President and first Treasurer of that Society. Clapham, acting through William Wilberforce, had an early and an honourable share

in movements for the improvement of public morals, for the mitigation of the Penal Code, for Prison Reform, and for National Education; but its chief glory is the part which it played in the Abolition of Negro Slavery.

It was in 1792 that William Wilberforce, who from his youth up had been the sworn foe of that enormous wickedness, came to live with his friend Henry Thornton, M.P. for Southwark, on Clapham Common. The Thorntons, a family of bankers and brewers, had been for three generations conspicuous by their splendid generosity to the causes in which they believed. Henry Thornton habitually gave away two-thirds of his fortune, and so employed the remainder as to make his house a home and a rallying-point for philanthropic energies. Of all earthly objects, the Abolition of the Slave Trade was the nearest to his heart. His house was at the south-west corner of Clapham Common, just where the ground slopes sharply up from the low-lying lands of Battersea. Hence its traditional name, "Battersea Rise House." It is a commonplace building of rather dingy brick, with such a façade as a child draws on a slate—five windows in the attics, five on the first floor, and on the ground floor two windows to the right and two to the left, with a door in the middle. Such was the house when Henry Thornton bought it from John Lubbock, great-grandfather of the present Lord Avebury. Nothing could be less interesting either to the eye or to the mind. The

interest was added by an illustrious hand. Henry Thornton was a political adherent and personal friend of William Pitt. Soon after he had settled in his new home, he was entertaining Pitt at dinner, and explained an improvement which he meant to make. This was a library, to be added to the existing house. Pitt was delighted with the scheme, and said, "I have always wished to build a library. Let me draw a plan for yours"—and he drew it forthwith on a half-sheet of letter-paper (which still survives). In Sir James Stephen's magniloquent phrase, "he dismissed for a moment his Budgets and his subsidies for the pleasure of planning an oval saloon. It arose at his bidding, and yet remains, a solitary monument of the architectural skill of that imperial mind. Lofty and symmetrical, it was curiously wainscoted, with books on every side, except where it opened on a far-extended lawn, reposing beneath the giant arms of aged elms and massive tulip-trees." Thus Sir James; and in connexion with this historic chamber, I recall an incident which shows the thoroughness of Mr. Gladstone's antipathies when once they were aroused. When his mind was inflamed by a study of Pitt's methods in Ireland he could make no terms with the author of the Act of Union. To use a homely colloquialism, he would not have him at any price, or in any field of achievement, whether as lawmaker, financier, War Minister, or private citizen. At this inopportune moment, a friend chanced to mention the oval library

at Battersea Rise. "An *oval* library? The very worst shape for a library that the human mind could conceive!" So poor Pitt was hastily dismissed from conversation, as unsuccessful in architecture as in statecraft and legislation. Whether an oval is or is not a good shape for a library is a point which I will not pause to discuss. Be that as it may, the oval library at Battersea Rise has some moral and intellectual associations of which the best-designed chamber in Europe might be proud. In it all the leaders of the Clapham Sect assembled in full force; and to them were added Bishop Jebb of Limerick, and Hannah More and her sister Patty, and Gisborne, the parson-squire of Needwood Forest, and John Singleton Copley, "a very clever young lawyer," who became Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst. Here, under the branching cedars and on the wide lawns which stretch toward Streatham and Balham, young Tom Macaulay played with little Sam Wilberforce, superintended by the precocious wisdom of Marianne Thornton, who "grows a lively miss," in 1800, and died in 1887, the last survivor of the Clapham Sect. The oval library was the council-chamber of all the good works which made Clapham famous. There the later stages of the great campaign against Slavery were organized, and there, for more than half a century, some of the truest friends of humanity and righteousness "took counsel together and walked as friends."

During the last fifty years Battersea Rise House has passed through various vicissitudes; has lost the

almost official character which once it wore ; and has been known chiefly as a memorial of great achievements and the depository of great traditions. To-day I read in the *Daily News* that, owing to a recent death and the resulting dispersion of property, this famous house, with its adjuncts and surroundings, is to be sold by auction on the 20th of this month.¹ Surely this is, if ever there was, a case for municipal purchase.

¹ June 1907.

XVIII

PURITANISM

MY recent lucubrations on Newton and Cowper, Olney and Clapham have led more than one correspondent to suggest that I should write rather more at large about Puritanism, ancient and modern. I willingly comply with the suggestion, although I am aware that there are few subjects with regard to which it is more difficult to disentangle one's mind from prejudice. It may seem a paradox, but it is really a truism, that most people get their notions of History from Literature. Very few of us have either the leisure or the aptitude for original research. We take our history on trust from historians; and the historians who have cared to write uncoloured history, and merely to record facts, without yielding to prepossessions or suggesting inferences, are few and far between; furthermore, they belong as a rule to the Tribe of Dryasdust, and their handiwork, however laborious and deserving, finds no general acceptance. But the writings of historians are by no means the only, perhaps they are not even the principal, sources of our historical beliefs. Romancists, essayists, poets,

and ballad-mongers are responsible for a vast amount of what passes for History in the mind of the average Englishman ; and the great mass of English literature, in all its forms, has been hostile to Puritanism. Macaulay says that from the Reformation to the Civil War almost every writer gifted with a fine sense of the ludicrous had taken some opportunity of assailing "the straight-haired, snuffling, whining saints, who christened their children out of the Book of Nehemiah, who groaned in spirit at the sight of Jack-in-the-Green, and who thought it impious to taste plum-porridge on Christmas Day." What was true before the Civil War was not less true after the Restoration. Howard's *Committee* and Butler's *Hudibras* are as strongly anti-Puritan as *The Alchemist* and *Bartholomew Fair*; and *Hudibras* has the advantage of a metrical form which makes it extremely difficult to forget. What the satirists did in verse graver writers did in prose. Clarendon's stately eloquence is saturated with bitter contempt for Puritans and Puritanism. Taylor's "golden sweetness" is sweetest when he is pleading for the freedom of conscience which Puritanism denied. Burnet wrote with chilly displeasure of the Puritans' claim to a spiritual monopoly. Hume satirized a moral scrupulosity which he could not understand. A century later, Macaulay, combining and heightening, as was his way, all the various reproaches against Puritanism which he found scattered in the writings of his forerunners, presented a picture of the "Sec-

taries" so odious that it would seem almost to justify the outrages of the Restoration. Take, for example, the famous passage about Bear-baiting, where he avers that the Puritan's antipathy to the sport "had nothing in common with the feeling which has in our own time induced the Legislature to interfere for the purpose of protecting beasts against the wanton cruelty of men. The Puritan hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators."

Thus traduced, and perhaps caricatured, alike by satirists, dramatists, divines, and historians, the Puritans have fared little better at the hands of the poets and novelists. Truly they have a poet of their own, and that poet is one of the chief glories of English literature; but the author of *Paradise Lost*

lived insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call earth,

and his verse did nothing to conciliate national affection for militant Puritanism. On the other side, a whole choir of poets, or at least of versifiers, have conspired to revile the Puritans. Andrew Marvell leads off with "the armed bands" which "did clap their bloody hands" at the execution of Charles I. Wordsworth follows with the "fierce maniac that usurped the name" of Religion, and "scourged England, struggling to be free," and this,

strange to relate, is Puritanism. Sir Walter Scott belabours "the round-headed rebels of Westminster Hall." Aytoun taught us to revile "the grim Geneva ministers" who preached to the condemned Montrose. Sir Francis Doyle incited young Oxford against "the Rebel-dogs" who "snuffled psalms." Browning condensed the history of the Great Rebellion into a rollicking stanza—

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell
Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry as well!
God for King Charles! Pym and his snarls
To the Devil, that pricks on such pestilent carles.

What chance has Puritanism against such a charge as this?

There are more Englishmen and Englishwomen than Dr. Dryasdust would like to think who take their history, directly and unquestioningly, from Sir Walter Scott; and with Puritanism in all its forms and phases Sir Walter had a most imperfect sympathy. With his travesties of Presbyterian fanaticism, his Headriggs and MacBriars and Bide-the-Bents, we have no immediate concern; but beyond doubt the effect of such stories as *Woodstock* and *Peperil of the Peak* was to create the impression that English Puritanism was sour, intolerant, and often hypocritical; and historical romancists of inferior calibre, such as J. H. Shorthouse and G. Whyte-Melville, adopted and popularized the same view in *John Inglesant* and *Holmby House*. So that, on the whole, the testimony of Literature

has been overwhelmingly hostile to the Puritans. The verdict of History is a different and a more ambiguous matter.

The lovers of *Essays in Criticism* will remember that Margate seemed to Matthew Arnold a "brick-and-mortar image of English Protestantism, representing it in all its prose, all its uncomeliness—let me add, all its salubrity." Similarly, I think, until quite recent times, even people who found nothing in their reading, whether of History, Poetry, or Romance, to make them love or admire Puritanism, yet assumed that it had been salubrious; and, furthermore, that, in spite of all its uncomeliness, it had been successful. Charles Reade said glibly that "there is no blood in England more rich in male courage, female chastity, and all the virtues" than the blood of Cromwell's Ironsides. Charles Kingsley shared, at least sometimes, the same notion, and spoke rapturously of "old Puritan blood which had flowed again and again beneath the knife of Star Chamber butchers and on the fields of Naseby and Sedgemoor"; and he maintained that, in the various questions at issue between Puritanism and the social habits of the age, Time has decided for the Puritans and against the Cavaliers. A much greater historian than Kingsley, J. R. Green, was possessed by the idea that we owe our national seriousness as well as our political freedom to Puritanism and to the Puritan triumph. An anonymous writer in *The Nonconformist*, whom Matthew Arnold cited in his delight-

ful essay on Falkland, affirmed that "the death of Hampden was a martyr's seal to truths assured of ultimate triumph."

It is when we read this resonant language, and compare it with the calm judgment of Mr. John Morley, of Mr. Frederic Harrison, of Mr. Firth, and of him whom Mr. Morley calls "the master-historian of the seventeenth century, Mr. Gardiner," that we feel a little shaken. The ground does not seem quite firm under our feet. We were accustomed to regard Puritanism as something rather hard and grim and unlovely; but we never questioned that it was strong, victorious, and, in the main, beneficent. This certainly was the traditional view; it was plausible, it was widely current, it had a good deal to say for itself; but the research bestowed by the great scholars whom I have just named, and by others like them, upon the history of the Rebellion and the Commonwealth has tended to modify profoundly the older view. "What, after all, did your great Cromwell do?" asked Johnson of Bozzy's father; and that sound Whig replied, "He garr'd Kings ken they had a *lith* in their neck." That cardinal fact is not disputed, and probably its consequences were far-reaching. Sir William Harcourt was accustomed to say that the reason why we had enjoyed political tranquillity, while France was shaken by repeated revolutions, was that we had cut off our King's head in the nick of time, whereas the French were 150 years behindhand. But Puritanism had other results than that which Lord Auchinleck ex-

tolled, and whether they all were equally beneficent is a question which cannot be answered off-hand. Writers and speakers of the traditional school would, I suppose, contend that the Puritan triumph was a triumph of Religion. On this point let a great critic and a serious lover of his country be heard: "So grossly imperfect, so false was the Puritan conception and presentation of righteousness; so at war with the ancient and inbred integrity, piety, good nature, and good humour of the English people, that it led straight to moral anarchy, the profligacy of the Restoration. It led to the Court, the manners, the stage, the literature which we know. It led, amongst that Middle Class where Religion still lived on, to a narrowness, an intellectual poverty, almost incredible. They entered the prison of Puritanism, and had the key turned upon their spirits there for two hundred years. It led to that character of their steady and respectable life which makes one shiver: its hideousness, its immense ennui."

Thus Matthew Arnold. In my next chapter I propose to compare his picture with the facts of Puritanism as it has existed in my own time, and perhaps still exists.

XIX

MODERN PURITANISM

"MY father, as a man of business, looked upon the labour of poets with contempt ; and, as a religious man of the Dissenting persuasion, he considered such pursuits as equally trivial and profane. Before you condemn him, you must recall to remembrance how too many of the poets in the end of the seventeenth century had led their lives and employed their talents. The sect to which my father belonged felt, or perhaps affected, a Puritanical aversion to the lighter exertions of literature." Sir Walter Scott, who, though he was not a professional historian, never wrote at random, is here portraying "the early part of the eighteenth century," when the Puritanism which had been dominant and ferocious under the Commonwealth, abased and ill-treated under Charles II. and James II., was emerging from the vicissitudes of reaction, and settling down into the character and aspect which it wore till a date well within present recollection. Then it was that, as Matthew Arnold said, "the Middle Class, where Religion still lived on, entered the prison of Puritanism, and had the key

turned upon their spirits there for two hundred years." But it was not only, though it was mainly, the Middle Class that "entered the prison of Puritanism." That prison has always held captives who belonged by birth to the higher and to the lower classes of society. So it was under Elizabeth and James and Charles; so it was, conspicuously, under the Commonwealth; so it was, increasingly, when Whitefield and the Wesleys shook the dry bones of indifferentism and unbelief, and purged the foul morasses of national corruption. But, from whatever class the recruits, or, as Arnold would have said, the prisoners, of Puritanism were drawn, they accepted its stern discipline with the same enthusiasm and practised it with the same fidelity. Aristocratic Puritanism, the Puritanism of the Middle Class, and the Puritanism of the poor, were stamped with exactly the same characteristics. To Puritanism all life was Duty, and pleasure had no place in its scheme. Selina Lady Huntingdon, with the most illustrious "quarterings" in the English Peerage, was as implacable an enemy to routs and cards and play-houses as George Whitefield, the tapster's son. Lord Dartmouth, of whom Richardson said that "he would have realized his own idea of Sir Charles Grandison if he had not been a Methodist," was as free from all taint of conformity with worldliness as Newton the cabin-boy or Berridge the buffoon. Lord Beaconsfield described a family of the highest rank and the strictest principles as "puritanical, severe, and formal in their manners—

their only relaxation the Bible Society, or a meeting for the conversion of the Jews."

That was written in 1847, and the lapse of twenty years did little to modify the Puritan's conception of pleasure. In 1869 Matthew Arnold wrote: "Look at the life imaged in such a newspaper as *The Nonconformist*—a life of jealousy of the Establishment, disputes, tea-meetings, openings of chapels, sermons," and "in the evenings, for a great treat, a lecture on Teetotalism or Nunneries. Can any life be imagined more hideous, more dismal, more unenviable?" Arnold, as he himself said, "knew his Dissenters experimentally," and, when he wrote of Puritanism, he seems generally to have had his eye on Nonconformity; but this is really too narrow a view of the subject. Such men as Fletcher of Madeley, James Hervey, A. M. Toplady, Grimshawe of Haworth, William Romaine, the two Milners, and Thomas Scott, although they were clergymen of the Established Church, were in all essential points as thorough-going Puritans as their brethren outside, and through their influence the Puritan theory of life and its responsibilities came to dominate the Evangelical school of Churchmen. In that school I was myself trained, and its characteristics are fresh in my recollection. True to the Puritan ideal at all times and in all societies, the Puritans of the English Church lived and moved and had their being in the thought of Duty. The more spiritual bearings of that thought could not be suitably discussed in this

book, but I must say a word about its bearings on practical life. In the first place, it strongly affected the question of Professions. Army and Navy, Diplomacy and Law, were regarded, and perhaps justly, as full of pitfalls. They were not, indeed, forbidden, but they were discouraged. If a young man did not feel disposed to be a clergyman or a doctor, it was thought most desirable that he should take to a career of money-making. The doctrine of the New Testament about the perils of Riches was a good deal diluted in Puritan teaching, which Archbishop Benson found to be "very concordant with wealth." Banking was held to be pre-eminently a fit pursuit for religious men; and, in these days of Total Abstinence, it is curious to note that Brewing was a peculiarly Puritan trade. Buxton, and Hanbury, and Hoare, and Whitbread, and Charrington are names which still testify to the Evangelical associations of Malt and Hops.

Duty being firmly established as the prime object of human life, one would think that room might have been found for Pleasure. But, as Sir Francis Doyle said that Wordsworth's "standard of intoxication was miserably low," so I may say that the Puritan's range of amusements was singularly circumscribed. Broadly speaking, balls were forbidden; though, indeed, Spurgeon once said that it was only the promiscuous dancing of men and women that he condemned (thereby leading *Punch* to draw a company of Baptist ministers fitting on their white kid gloves and soliciting the honour of one another's hands

for the next dance). The Theatre was absolutely condemned, and not the slightest distinction was drawn between a play by Shakespeare or Sheridan, and a play by Congreve or Wycherley. In either case it was "the Play," and the Play was a snare of Satan. Cards were regarded, by a picturesque effort of imagination, as the Devil's Prayer-book; and, if a child won sixpence at "the Race-game," it was impounded for the benefit of Missionaries. With regard to athletic exercises and field-sports the rule of life was not quite so exact. Excellent Puritans might be seen on fit occasion in the Pavilion at Lord's, but none, under any conceivable circumstances, on Newmarket Heath or the Epsom Downs. No one condemned shooting, but some thought hunting wicked—a distinction not altogether clear in principle. An Evangelical clergyman said to a fox-hunting parishioner, in a tone of significant reproof, "I too should like to hunt, if I could hunt with a field of Saints." One section of the Puritan school—the Quakers—carried their repudiation of worldly enjoyment much further; made war on every form of beauty, and treated all art, even music, as an emanation from the Inferno. Well might Matthew Arnold say that "a piano in a Quaker's drawing-room is a step for him to more humane life." This abhorrence of Art was a peculiarity of Quakerism, and did not extend to Puritanism as a whole. Quakers, on the contrary, were comparatively lax on "the Sunday Question," whereas with Puritans

generally the strict observance of Sunday was a vital point. On that day no hospitality could be given or accepted ; all kinds of games were forbidden, and all such exercises as riding and driving. A prominent Puritan still spared to us punished a child for giving an apple to his pony on the First Day of the Week. The distinction between "Sunday books" and others was rigidly enforced. Meals were scrupulously regulated so as to allow, and indeed compel, the servants to attend church ; and in the most consistent homes there was no hot food on Sunday except eggs at breakfast and soup and potatoes at dinner. But Sunday (which is a Feast) was the only day of abstinence. All the rest of the week, including Friday, the Puritans ate and drank to their hearts' content. There was no Blue Ribbon in those days. Teetotalism was regarded with suspicion, as a subtle form of "works," and tending to self-righteousness. Debarred from worldliness, the Puritans went in for comfort, and "the pleasures of the table" were among the few which everyone could enjoy with a clear conscience. In my early days I moved in circles much frequented by Puritan clergymen, both Anglican and Nonconformist ; and, though I never saw one who suffered from the characteristic weakness of Mr. Stiggins, there were not a few whose gastronomical instincts resembled those of Mr. Chadband, and went far to justify Matthew Arnold when he said that the modern Puritan's idea of Heaven was "a glorified and unending tea-meeting."

In my last chapter, and in this, I have spoken of historic Puritanism, and of the successive changes through which it passed into the phase which I myself remember. What is it to-day? Some years ago, in all good faith, I addressed a letter on this question to a Nonconformist paper. Like Rosa Dartle, I "asked to know." I asked whether modern Puritans thought it wicked to dance, wicked to go to a theatre, wicked to play cards, wicked to amuse themselves on Sunday. I could get no reply, and I should be really grateful if this chapter might elicit the information which I desired. As far as I myself can judge, Puritanism, if it can still be said to exist, is vastly laxer, both inside and outside the Church of England, than it was forty years ago. I note, indeed, one instance of increased rigidity—the sacred and testing value now attached to Total Abstinence. As far as outward observance goes, Puritanism seems to have concentrated all its force on that one form of asceticism; but as regards everything else, whether in the region of belief or of conduct, "*Thou shalt*" and "*Thou shalt not*"—which formerly made the strength of Puritanism—seem to have been tacitly, but by common consent, repealed. Whether the national character is likely to be improved by the change is a question on which I am not prepared to dogmatize. An apostle taught his disciples to obey "the perfect law of liberty," and in that reconciliation of two generally opposed ideas—the idea of Liberty and the idea of Law—lies the true philosophy of life.

XX

DEAN CHURCH

SOME weeks ago, in writing about Keble, I made a casual reference to Dean Church. To my gratification, and also to my surprise, I received a letter from a friendly reader in Manchester saying that he held the name of Church in high affection, and begging me to write more fully about Church and some of his fellow-workers. I say that this surprised me, for, though Church has been pronounced by so unecclesiastical a critic as Mr. Morley to be "the fine flower of Oxford culture," and as having united "the best gifts that come of culture, sound and just sense, and unstained purity of spirit," he lived so little in the public eye, and slipped so quietly out of life, that people generally have agreed to forget him. All the more readily on that account I comply with my correspondent's request, and endeavour to recall the lineaments of a singularly exalted character.

Richard William Church was born in 1815. His father had been born and brought up in the Society of Friends, of which it has been truly said that no religious body whose separate life has been so short has left so

distinct an impression on its members. "A certain sobriety in judgment, consideration in action, restraint in the formation of opinions, direct and habitual responsibility to an unseen Power, have been the constant marks of the best examples of the 'Friends,' and those who love to trace out the sequence of hereditary qualities may please themselves by discovering these same features in the Dean of St. Paul's"—but in using that title we anticipate by fifty-five years. Richard Church was born at Lisbon, where his father was engaged in business ; but from his third year to his thirteenth his home was in Italy. Then, his father having died, his mother returned to England ; and, after a few years at an unimportant school, Church entered Wadham College, Oxford, in 1833, the year from which Cardinal Newman taught us to date the "Oxford Movement." He obtained a First Class in Classics in 1836, was elected a Fellow of Oriel in 1838, was ordained Deacon in 1839, became a Tutor of his College, and remained there till 1852, when he was ordained Priest, accepted the living of Whatley, married, and settled down to the pastoral care of two hundred villagers in the Vale of Taunton. From that profound seclusion he was summoned by Mr. Gladstone in 1871 to become Dean of St. Paul's. He held the deanery for nineteen years, and died at the end of 1890. Such are the few and unexciting landmarks of Church's external life ; its interest lay within and below. "It was always his way to be an invisible force, not conspicuously acting or speaking

himself, but influencing others who did speak and act." I am old enough to remember that, when his appointment to the Deanery of St. Paul's was announced, even well-informed people were bewildered. Who in the world, they asked, is this fossil whom Gladstone has dug up? What are his merits? What has he done? Is there anything to justify his elevation to one of the most conspicuous and influential places in the Church of England? To these and similar questions all sorts of answers were suggested. Church was a Tractarian. He was a Ritualist. He was an advanced Liberal. As Proctor at Oxford he had vetoed the condemnation of the famous Tract XC. He had supported Gladstone in the disestablishment of the Irish Church—and a dozen other statements, some true, some false, but all equally irrelevant. For instance, it was true that Church was a Tractarian—a close disciple and coadjutor of Newman in his reviving and restoring work. It was true that, when Newman wrote No. 90 of *Tracts for the Times* and showed that the XXXIX. Articles were designedly susceptible of a Catholic interpretation, the Protestant party at Oxford sought to condemn the Tract as unsound, and Church, in the exercise of his Proctorial authority, vetoed the condemnation. But it was not true that he was a Ritualist. He belonged to an ecclesiastical generation which knew nothing of Ritual, and his own personal interest was rather in the inner than the outer part of Divine Worship. Again, it was true that he supported Irish Disestablishment, on the

simple ground that it is right for a nation to "clean its hands" of palpable injustice; but it was not true that he was, in the usual sense of the word, a Liberal. In 1865 he described himself as "a Conservative by instinct and feeling"; and, greatly as he admired Mr. Gladstone's character, he was a very free critic of Gladstonian policy. He wrote in 1880: "Of all the evil symptoms about, this incapacity to perceive Gladstone's real nobleness is one of the worst. It is a bad thing to have a great man before a nation, and that a great minority in it should not be able to recognize him." But in 1882, just when Mr. Forster had resigned the Chief Secretaryship of Ireland, he wrote: "I have tried hard to believe that Gladstone has been right; but it seems to me that he is blind to Irish insolence and Irish keen sense of their winning game." And again in 1886 he wrote about Home Rule: "Perhaps Gladstone is right, and the *via salutis* may open out of the thick of disaster. But I can't see it, and I have to try as well as I can to unite unabated admiration with the impossibility of moral or intellectual agreement."

It is true, of course, that these vigorous expressions of dissent belong to a period later than Church's appointment to the Deanery, but Gladstone could scarcely have failed to know in 1871 that Church was, as he said of himself, "a Conservative by instinct and feeling." Why, then, did he drag him from his country parsonage to a peculiarly difficult and responsible charge, at what Lightfoot called "the centre

of the world's concourse"? And why did he, eleven years later, urge him to accept the Primacy of All England? The simple and sufficient answer is that, in Gladstone's opinion, Church was the greatest man in the Anglican communion, and one of the greatest who had ever adorned it.

What were the constituent elements of that greatness? We will take the least important first. Church was a man of singular and varied accomplishments. He wrote a consummate style, clear and flexible as running water. "It has always seemed to me," he said, "that thoughts brought their own words. . . . The great thing in writing is to know what you want and mean to say, and to say it in words that come as near to your meaning as you can get them to come." His natural faculty of writing was exercised and disciplined by twenty years of journalism. He was one of the founders of the *Guardian*, for which he wrote regularly; and he was a frequent contributor to the *British Critic* and the *Christian Remembrancer*, and in later years to the *Times* and the *Saturday Review*. His range of intellectual interests covered, besides the classics in which he had been trained and the theology which was his business, the whole range of literature, all mediæval history, and some large tracts of physical science. His Essay on Dante remains, in the judgment of competent critics, the best introduction to the *Divina Commedia*, alike in its theological and its political significance. He was equally at home with Pascal and Butler, and

with authors so dissimilar as St. Anselm, Bacon, and Spenser. As a preacher (reading always from a manuscript) he had a penetrating and almost terrible power. He dwelt habitually on the sterner side of the Christian revelation—on sin and discipline and judgment; and, when he handled those awful themes, he seemed, as was said of another, to “inhabit his sentences” and to speak the ascertained realities of a lifelong experience. But his preaching, unique and memorable as it was, was simply the verbal expression of a character which Dante would have called “a spiritual splendour.” Pride, ambition, vanity, self-seeking had no place in his nature. He shrank from wealth, fame, and high station as most men shrink from poverty and obscurity. His self-mastery was absolute. He was a natural-born ascetic, for whom the body, with its demands and impulses, could scarcely be said to exist. His patience was one of his most characteristic traits; but, when he saw tyranny or injustice or the insolence of wealth and power, he could be “angry with a quiet and self-possessed intensity which made his anger very memorable.” His sense of justice was a second nature, and his mind was a court of final appeal. He was extraordinarily candid in his toleration of opinions which conflicted with his own; but he was unmerciful to dogmatism, cocksureness, and the intellectual vice of treating open subjects as if they were closed. “Without being a sceptic or an agnostic,” he said, “one may feel that there are

questions in the world which never will be answered on this side the grave, *perhaps not on the other.*" Yet, with all this openness of mind and this absolute candour about the limits of certitude, he recognized as clearly as any man the fact that, when once you see your way plainly and are persuaded about the side on which truth and justice lie, indifference and timidity are moral offences. "There was," says his colleague Canon Scott Holland, "a sense in him of holding a fort against grim odds." Intensely as he disliked controversy, he never shrank from it where principle was involved. "The truth is," he said, "that in a battle you must fight." To enumerate the various strifes in which he acted on that robust conviction would be to write the history of the English Church for fifty years, and for such an attempt this chapter scarcely affords sufficient scope.

Enough has been said, perhaps not to show, but at least to suggest, the intellectual and moral greatness of the man whom I was asked to describe. And yet to have attributed to him when alive greatness of either sort would have been to run the risk of a rebuke which the eulogist would not have soon forgotten. Towards the end of his life he wrote: "I often have a kind of waking dream—up one road, the image of a man decked and adorned as if for a triumph, carried up by rejoicing friends, who praise his goodness and achievements; and on the other road, turned back-to-back to it, there is the very man

himself, in sordid and squalid apparel, surrounded not by friends but by ministers of justice, and going, while his friends are exulting, to his certain and perhaps awful judgment."

Where, outside Dante, can we find a more impressive picture?

XXI

EXETER HALL

"TOP-BOOTS or Exeter Hall." In this brief but trenchant phrase a bygone Bishop of Oxford summarized the Clergy of Buckinghamshire. Not one of them was a Churchman after the diocesan's own heart. Some were secularly-minded, and spent all their time in hunting; the rest were Low Church, and sought their recreation at the May Meetings of Evangelical Societies. Exeter Hall was built in 1830 on Lord Exeter's estate in the Strand, and from that date till the present year, when it has been surrendered to a firm of caterers, it has been the ark and sanctuary of the Evangelical party. It was built at a time when that party was at the height of its power, and when it was no longer thought decorous that such institutions as the Bible Society and the Church Missionary Society and the Society for the Conversion of the Jews should assemble in Freemasons' Hall or the London Tavern. By 1840 the theological tradition of the new Hall was so completely established that it found its way into *Ingoldsby Legends* — that vulgar but amusing

mirror of pre-Victorian manners. Lord Tom Noddy, driving his cabriolet eastward in order to attend an execution at Newgate,

Upset a stall Near Exeter Hall,
Which made all the pious Church-Mission folks squall.

The poet omits to mention the month when this tragedy occurred, but collateral evidence makes me feel almost confident that it was May; for May was, by virtue of some law of spiritual affinity not yet scientifically explained, the month of meetings at Exeter Hall. A keen observer of ecclesiastical phenomena noted this mysterious fact some years ago. "For those situated at either pole of the ecclesiastical hemisphere, May is eminently a religious month. With the Catholic it is the *Mois de Marie*, the month which he consecrates to his ideal womanhood. With the Evangelical Protestant it is the *Mois de Meeting*, devoted to Exeter Hall and much speaking. It is a time when passers along the Strand see unctuous gentlemen, intensely in earnest, go in and out at that portal of Orthodoxy. Then the Church and the Conventicle meet together; the Platform and the Pulpit kiss each other. The *Record* is in large demand, and the *Rock* runs into special editions."

For fifty years the chair of Exeter Hall was the throne of the great Lord Shaftesbury, who seemed to preside by Divine right over every Evangelical society. One of those May Meetings has a permanent place in my affectionate remembrance

because it gave occasion for one of the best pieces of reporting which I have ever encountered. The orator, a near kinsman of my own, was protesting against some cruel misrepresentation with which his favourite Society had been assailed. And the worst of it was that some portion at least of the offensive statement had a foundation in fact. Warming to his work, the orator exclaimed, "Alas! gentlemen, we all know, by bitter experience, that the worst foe which any cause can have to fight is a double lie in the shape of half a truth." This fine passage appeared in the Annual Report of the Society's proceedings as "a double eye in the shape of half a tooth"; and, when the orator, justly incensed, asked the Secretary why this horrid nonsense had been put into his mouth, the Secretary replied, with disarming blandness, that he had certainly found the phrase a little obscure, but concluded that it came out of "an old writer," and therefore had printed it in inverted commas.

But the historical associations of Exeter Hall are not entirely ludicrous. The Low Churchmen had votes, and their Nonconforming friends in the Middle Class had more; and, when a public man insulted their shibboleths or made light of their prejudices, they turned and rent him with dramatic effect. Speaking of the proposed grant to Maynooth in 1845 and the Protestant opposition to it, Macaulay, tempted by his love of epigram, said: "The Orangeman raises his war-whoop, and Exeter Hall sets up

its bray." The Orangemen were perhaps a negligible quantity, but Exeter Hall had its votaries in Edinburgh, and that allusion to the "bray" cost Macaulay his seat.

The year 1857 saw the opening of a new chapter in the history of Exeter Hall. A band of zealous religionists, headed by Lord Shaftesbury, determined to start a series of what would now be called "Mission Services" on Sunday evenings. These services were intended to meet the case of people who attended no place of worship, and who, it was thought, might be attracted by more informal ministrations than those of the Parish Church. Exeter Hall was chosen as the scene of operations. The service proceeded on the lines of the Prayer-book, and the preachers were such Evangelical leaders as Bishop Villiers, Bishop Bickersteth, Dean Close, and Dean M'Neile. Bishop Tait, then just appointed to the See of London, sanctioned the scheme, the novelty attracted large congregations, and all seemed prosperous. Then suddenly the Vicar of the Parish in which Exeter Hall stands swooped down upon Lord Shaftesbury and his coadjutors, claimed a legal right to interdict the services, and called on Bishop Tait to aid him. The Bishop could not dispute the legal right, as the law then stood, though he deplored the folly of putting it in force. The promoters of the services were advised that, by discontinuing liturgical forms, they would render themselves independent of the Incumbent's jurisdiction; so the services went on as

before, only without the Prayer-book ; and all that the Incumbent took by his motion was that a great congregation was driven from the use of Anglican formularies into the devotional methods of undenominational religion. Of what profession was it that Clarendon said—"They understand the least and take the worst measure of human affairs, of all mankind that can write and read"?

Besides its fame as a place of public assemblage, Exeter Hall is entitled to our respectful regard because it was for more than a quarter of a century the home of "The Young Men's Christian Association"; and that Association, founded in 1844, was the first attempt to bind young men of the commercial and industrial classes in a common effort for moral and spiritual self-improvement. It was a genuine and laudable movement in the way of social reform ; and, if it was in any direction open to criticism, its defects were due to the theology of those who dominated it. For the great Evangelical party, in its high zeal for the souls of men, was rather apt to leave out of account the fact that the body also is part of human nature, and that, if the man is to be perfectly developed, his body as well as his soul must have its share of culture. The High Churchmen of sixty years ago would have nothing to do with the Young Men's Christian Association, because it had no ecclesiastical limits and freely admitted Nonconformists. The Broad Church, to whom this liberality would naturally be congenial, looked askance

at the Association because it did not cater sufficiently for the needs of the body. Thus Tom Hughes wrote in 1857: "Don't let reformers of any sort think that they are going really to lay hold of the working boys and young men of England by any educational grapnel whatever which has not some equivalent for the games of the old county 'Veast' in it—something to put in the place of the back-swording and wrestling and racing; something to try the muscles of men's bodies and the endurance of their hearts, and to make them rejoice in their strength. In all the new-fangled comprehensive plans which I see, this is left out; and the consequence is that your great Mechanics' Institutes end in intellectual priggism, and your Christian Young Men's Societies in religious Pharisaism." That may have been true enough when Tom Hughes wrote it, but half a century has brought its changes; and the influence of such men as the late Mr. Quintin Hogg and the present Lord Kinnaird has exorcised effeminacy and self-righteousness. In order to "put off the old man" it is no longer necessary to put on the old woman.

It should not be forgotten that, in addition to these varied activities, Exeter Hall housed for fifty years the Sacred Harmonic Society, and thereby helped to cultivate musical taste in a class which knew nothing of operas or concerts. It is perhaps a pity that a building which has so long and so memorable a record of spiritual and social endeavour should pass to utterly different, though quite harmless,

uses. However, it has really done its work. The huge and hideous "Church House" at Westminster, prosaic in aspect as in name, provides ample space for the anniversary meetings of the great societies. The Albert Hall on Sunday afternoon caters for those who find their religion in music. Guilds and Clubs and Youths' Institutes and Men's Services flourish in every parish; and all these are noteworthy and excellent developments of our social life. But the men who built Exeter Hall were pioneers, and, as long as the Hall stands, it will be a mute witness to their faith and zeal.

XXII

THE STAR AND GARTER

"THE Star and Garter Hotel, Richmond Hill, one of the most historic and celebrated hotels in England, is to be sold by public auction." Simple words these, and yet they awake in a reflective mind a host of literary and social memories. The very sign carries us back nearly three hundred years, and the whole interspace is filled with festive and refreshing associations. "The embroidered strap, as thou callest it, around my knee," says Leicester to Amy Robsart, "is the English Garter, an ornament which Kings are proud to wear"; and, from the distant days when Edward III. founded the Order, "The Garter" became a favourite sign for English taverns, competing in popularity with such Shakespearean symbols as "St. George and the Dragon," "The White Hart," and "The Boar's Head." There are no more vivid scenes in English comedy than those which have "The Garter Inn" at Windsor for their centre, and the bibulous Knight and his merry men for their principal actors. But so far, and for nearly three centuries later, the sign was the Garter only. The

Order was founded in 1348, and it was not till 1629 that the Star was added to the Garter. The Order had been from the beginning under the immediate protection of St. George, and that Saint's red cross on its white field was borne by the Knights of the Garter as a badge on the left side of the mantle, even as to-day we may see it displayed in Mr. Cope's great portrait of King Edward VII. in the Royal Academy. But, as years went on, succeeding Sovereigns conferred additional decorations on their favourite Order, and the latest of these was the Star, which was formed by encircling St. George's badge with eight points of silver. Thus the splendid insignia became complete. The sign-painter immediately seized on the combination of the Star and the Garter, the latter encircling the former, as a graceful arrangement of heraldic symbols, and it became a favoured and popular sign. But *the* "Star and Garter," emphatically and *par excellence*, is the famous hostelry which, perched on the crown of Richmond Hill, commands that exquisite view of the winding Thames which no one but Turner could ever reproduce on canvas.

The agreeable author of *A Description of England and Wales*, published in 1770, informs us that Richmond, "situated twelve miles from London, is esteemed the finest village in the British dominions, and hence some have termed it 'The Frascati of England.'" At this "village," as many will remember, Mr. Tracy Tupman spent the evening of his

days, "walking on the Terrace with a youthful and jaunty air"; and it has long been a kind of Mecca to jaded Londoners who can still enjoy a good dinner and a pretty view. For at least a hundred years the "Star and Garter" at Richmond has held a unique position in the social world as the scene of a luxurious yet refined conviviality. Here my boyish memories come to my assistance, and I recall a touching episode of the "Star and Garter" in the summer of 1863. The *Diner à la Russe* had then been recently introduced, and floral decorations on the table were only beginning to supersede the hideous trophies of Georgian plate—silver "candelabra" and frosted *epergnes*—in which our grandparents had delighted. The head waiter at the "Star and Garter" was displaying, with the artist's proper pride, some rather crude combination of calceolarias and scarlet geraniums which he had just evolved; and in reply to a merited complaint he said: "Yes. It is very well in a small way. But, if you could see this room when the dinner is three guineas a head, exclusive of wine, then it's a little heaven on earth." Here, indeed, was a foretaste of celestial joy; and it was probably such a scene as this that Matthew Arnold beheld, with serene and detached enjoyment, on the 13th of July 1869. "On Tuesday," he writes to his mother, "we dined at the 'Star and Garter' with the Leafs—a party of some thirty people; and I send you the bill of fare, which, with a bouquet, was in everyone's place, that you may see what one

of these Richmond dinners, given by a rich City man, is."

All novelists who described the social amenities of London in the Victorian Age have paid their tribute to the "Star and Garter." 'Tis long since I read my Whyte Melville, but I should be much surprised if Digby Grand did not entertain a rattling party there; and it was there, I think, that Ouida's heroes and heroines wreathed one another's locks with roses, "which had been steeped in purple Burgundy." Miss Braddon, herself an honoured denizen of Richmond, delights to describe the virtuous Baronet, whose "fine volume of rich bass voice sounded remarkably well on the water, after a dinner at the 'Star and Garter,' in that dim, dewy hour when the willow-shadowed Thames is as a southern lake, and the slow dip of the oars is in itself a kind of melody." James Payn, whose keenest interests in life were circumscribed by the cab-radius, gave us, as was meet and right, several excellent dinners at the "Star and Garter": "'Here is a fly,' cried the Merchant Prince—'jump in. To the *Star and Garter*, Richmond. I am as fixed to go to Richmond as ever was General Grant.' So, in the glorious eventide, it happened that, sitting after a royal banquet over goodly wine, we once more saw the winding river which had borne us so far and so well on its quiet bosom, and smelt once more the cool, soft, river airs, made odorous on their way by lilac-flowers and chestnut bloom."

The allusion to General Grant and a remoter

Richmond attaches this citation to a date in the early 'sixties; but Lord Beaconsfield knew all about the "Star and Garter" in 1837. "Count Mirabel enjoyed the drive to Richmond, as if he had never been to the 'Star and Garter' in his life. The dinner was as gay as the drive, and they returned by water. It was a delicious summer evening. The setting sun bathed the bowers of Fulham with refulgent light just as they were off delicate Rosebank; but the air long continued warm and always soft, and the last few miles of their pleasant voyage were tinted by the young and glittering moon. *The heart opens; it is a dangerous moment.*"

It was only right that Lord Beaconsfield, always romantic, and writing *Henrietta Temple*, which he termed "a love story," should thus fasten on the sentimental associations and potential romances of a dinner at the "Star and Garter." But the famous inn had other attractions than those of gourmandise and gallantry. One can scarcely imagine that it was either of those passions, strong though they certainly are, which drew young Mr. William Gladstone, M.P., to a dinner at Richmond in June 1836, and induced him to take "a two hours' walk home at night." But even more incongruous with the current notions of the "Star and Garter" is the use to which it was put by some ecclesiastically-minded laymen in 1841. In that year Bunsen, the Prussian Ambassador in London, mooted and carried his quaint scheme for planting at Jerusalem a Protestant Bishop who should bear rule

over Anglican and Lutheran clergy. On the birthday of the King of Prussia, Bunsen gave a dinner at Richmond, and among the eleven guests were Lord Shaftesbury and Mr. Gladstone. The former thus described the occasion: "It was a happy and a stirring meeting, with much feeling of loyalty, affection, reverence, and hope. I proposed the King's health. May he revive, among us Gentiles, the glory and the faith of David and Hezekiah. . . . Gladstone stripped himself of a part of his Puseyite garments, spoke like a pious man, rejoiced in the Bishopric of Jerusalem, and proposed the health of Alexander (the Bishop-designate). This is delightful, for he is a good man, and a clever man, and an industrious man."

Even the "Star and Garter," which in its long and chequered career must have sheltered many curious combinations, never saw a stranger medley—a Lutheran diplomatist entertaining his most religious friends at a Tavern Dinner, in honour of an arrangement by which an extremely untheological Monarch should join with the English Primate in appointing a spiritual overseer, as Newman said, for "Protestants, Nestorians, Jacobites, Monophysites, and all the heretics one could hear of, and even form a sort of league with the Mussulman against the Greek Orthodox and the Latin Catholics."

Before very long Mr. Gladstone came to see the absurdity of the scheme, and withdrew from all participation in it; but on the night of Bunsen's Richmond

dinner he evidently was in a hot fit of enthusiasm. Bunsen, describing the occasion, writes :—

“Never was heard a more exquisite speech. It flowed like a gentle and translucent stream. We drove back to town in the clearest starlight, Gladstone continuing with unabated animation to pour forth his harmonious thoughts in melodious tone.”

The strayed revellers who gaze to-day from the terraced gardens of the “Star and Garter” may notice one feature in the landscape which neither Henry VIII., nor Queen Caroline, nor the poet Thomson, nor any of the historical inhabitants of Royal Richmond, ever beheld. Piercing the westward sky, there rises a towering column, which guards and overlooks, as Burke would say, the subjected plains of Petersham and Twickenham. It is, in reality, the chimney of some gigantic waterworks, but it would never do to admit that so idyllic a landscape was profaned by so base and utilitarian an invader. In order to save the situation against tactless enquiries, Lord Russell, who lived for forty years close to the “Star and Garter” gate of Richmond Park, invented a pleasing myth. “What is that column?” was the invariable question of the intelligent visitor. “Oh, don’t you know? That is the Middlesex Martyrs’ Memorial.” It is an interesting trait of human nature that no one ever was found to ask who the Middlesex Martyrs were, or what was the cause for which they suffered.

XXIII

CARDINAL YORK

A HUNDRED years ago to-day,¹ "consoled by the last comforts of the Church, fortified by the Apostolic blessing, with the hopes of a fervent Catholic in his heart, and with the serene faith of the just on his brow, Henry Benedict, Cardinal Duke of York, fled to God's bosom. So disappeared from earth the last sublime glory of the House of Stuart."

I am not concerned to maintain the proposition contained in this last sentence, for it would probably involve me in an acrid controversy with those inheritors of the Jacobite tradition who maintain that the legitimate Sovereign of these isles is to be found in Bavaria, and trace a fantastic succession, through the Houses of Modena and Savoy and Orleans, from the fourth daughter of Charles I. It is enough to say that, according to all usual reckoning, the line of the exiled Stuarts came to an end when Cardinal York died. For practical purposes Jacobitism had ceased at the death of Prince Charles Edward, and since that date has lingered only in the dreams of the

¹ July 13, 1907.

"Cycle of the White Rose" and the "Thames Valley Legitimist Association"; but the career of the younger brother was so romantic that the centenary of his death seems to deserve a word of commemoration.

On the 10th of June 1688, "a day long kept sacred by the too-faithful adherents of a bad cause," was born "the most unfortunate of princes, destined to seventy-seven years of exile and wandering, of vain projects, of honours more galling than insults, and of hopes such as make the heart sick." This, of course, was James Francis Stuart, commonly called "the Chevalier St. George," and, after his father's death in 1706, "the Pretender" to the throne which James II. had forfeited. He married Mary Clementine Sobieski, by whom he had two sons. Of these the elder was Charles Edward, the "Young Pretender," who, after the death of James Francis in 1766, became titularly King Charles III. of England. He died without children in 1788; and then, as I said just now, English Jacobitism became, for practical purposes, extinct. Those Scotch and English families which, ever since the flight of James II., had remained, in however doubtful and despondent a fashion, faithful to the cause of the exiled House, were heartily tired of the ostracism and the disabilities which their useless loyalty entailed on them. Had Charles Edward left legitimate children, or even a brother who could perpetuate the race, they might still have hesitated to transfer their allegiance; but the Young Pretender's only brother was a priest, and with him

the succession was bound to die. So Non-jurors went to Church, and Jacobites went to Court, and suspected politicians, anxious to regain the seats in Parliament and the offices of State which their forefathers had enjoyed, made haste to take the oaths to George III., and Jacobitism in England died a natural death. In Rome it lingered for eighteen years longer, centred in the pathetic person of the Cardinal Duke of York.

James Francis Stuart had fixed his dwelling-place at Rome, where his kingly rank was recognized, and where he enjoyed the special patronage of the Holy See. There, on the 6th of March 1725, was born Henry Benedict Stuart. His father, exercising an imaginary prerogative, created him Duke of York. On the death of his elder brother, Charles Edward, he became titularly King Henry IX. of England, and his death, a hundred years ago to-day, brought the issue of James II. to an end.

Henry Benedict Stuart grew up a handsome and active boy. His portraits show eyes full of vivacity and brightness, and a very agreeable expression, marred only by a weak and irresolute chin. He was passionately fond of sport, exercise, and adventure; and from his earliest youth he showed his devotion to the Catholic Religion by a virtuous life (which the satirists of the time did not scruple to lampoon) in the midst of debauched and profligate surroundings. He had no natural love for strife and contention; but he was profoundly loyal to the Divinely-sanctioned cause, as he deemed it, of his exiled House, and to

the interests of his father and brother. With a view to serving these more actively he accepted a commission in the French army, and eagerly watched for an opportunity of joining his brother, Charles Edward, in the ill-starred campaign of 1745-6. He was appointed to the command of the French forces at Boulogne and Dunkirk, and lived in daily hope that he would be ordered to cross the Channel and push his way northward till he joined his brother's army. The order was never given. It seems almost certain that Louis XV. played false, and that, while outwardly professing the most friendly sentiments towards the Stuarts, he had no mind to see them reconquer England. At any rate it is certain that the opportunity which Henry Benedict so earnestly desired was repeatedly postponed and finally withheld. Charles Edward was left to fight his battles single-handed. The French King looked on, with friendly unconcern; and on the 16th of April 1746, the slaughter of Culloden brought a picturesque episode in military history to a dismal end.

To Henry Benedict Stuart, Culloden was the beginning of a new and strangely different life. He had done all that courage, loyalty, and brotherly love demanded of him. He had been tricked and abused; and he saw, or thought he saw, that the cause of the exiled House was finally defeated. He was not yet twenty-two; the world was all before him where to choose; and all the circumstances were opportune for the realization of an ideal which from

his earliest days had been present to his mind. In May 1747 he returned to Rome, and six weeks later the decision which was to govern the remainder of his life was made known. On the 27th of June Sir Horace Mann, the British Resident in Rome, wrote thus to his friend Horace Walpole:—

“The Pretender’s second son is to be made a Cardinal! . . . They say he is to be Legate of Avignon for life, and that he is to have the Archbishoprick of Monte Reale, which they say is worth near 100,000 ducats a year. Is not he vastly right to become Cardinal?”

That is just the sort of ill-natured comment which a sceptical man of the world would be sure to make on a transition from a military to an ecclesiastical career; and perhaps it derived some point from the curious fact that, though Henry Benedict Stuart became a Cardinal on the 3rd of July 1747, he was not yet a Priest. There was one obvious reason why he should not seek the priesthood. Once a priest, he would be sealed to a celibate life, and all who desired the perpetuation of the House of Stuart deprecated a step which must be fatal to their hopes. But it never was easy to turn young Henry Benedict from a fixed resolve. He was hurried through the Minor Orders, and on the 1st of September he was ordained priest. “His entry on the priesthood was to the Stuart cause a second, and a more fatal, Culloden.” Honours, offices, and emoluments were showered on the Cardinal Duke of York, as he was now styled,

with a profusion which might have seemed to justify Sir Horace Mann's sneer, had it not been for the simple and unostentatious but unmistakable piety which marked his daily life. Even Mann was constrained to admit it: "The new Cardinal is all devotion. He fasts and prays as much as his mother used to do, and, they say, has ruined his constitution." The year 1761 witnessed a decisive change in his life. In that year he was made Bishop of Frascati, and henceforward he threw himself with all the ardour of his nature into the duties of the pastoral charge. That charge he took very seriously. Outwardly, he practised all the pomp and circumstance which, according to Roman ideals, befit a highly-placed ecclesiastic; inwardly, his life was spent in prayer, abstinence, and sacred study. His munificence in charity would have gratified the Saints and horrified the Political Economists; and his constant care for the spiritual and temporal wants of the peasantry gained him the splendid title of "Protector of the Poor." So, calmly, happily, uneventfully, passed the years between 1771 and 1788, and then the sacred tranquillity of Frascati was rudely broken. On the 31st of January in the latter year Charles Edward died, and was succeeded in his visionary Kingship by his brother, Henry Benedict, who now ascended a fictitious throne under the title of King Henry IX. of England. Henceforward he wrote the regal initial "R." between his Christian name and his title of Cardinal—"Enrico R. Cardinale." The Royal Crown

of England was displayed on his seals and carriages. He took for his motto the pathetic words—"Non desiderii hominum sed voluntate Dei." He "touched" for the King's Evil. His household and visitors addressed him as "Sire" and "Majesty." As his biographer says, "Not a few loyal subjects of George III. were guilty of a mild form of treason when paying their respects to the venerable Cardinal-King at Frascati." Among them were Jane Duchess of Gordon, and her daughter Lady Georgiana Gordon, who by marrying the sixth Duke of Bedford swamped her Jacobitism in Whiggery. The "reign" of Henry IX. was shadowed by one tremendous storm. When Bonaparte, "swift and terrible as the lightning of God," overran Italy, the venerable Henry Benedict was driven from his beloved Frascati, and, until friendly relations had been established between the Pope and the Emperor, he was only preserved from indigence by the magnanimous generosity of George III. When calm was at length restored, he returned to Frascati, and there, except for the periods of residence at Rome which were imposed on him by his duties as Dean of the College of Cardinals, he passed the remainder of his life. He died of gradual decay, and was buried, with splendid pomp, in the crypt of St Peter's.

Scion of a kingly lineage, heir of thrones and sceptres he,
 Dispossessed, discrowned, and exiled, last of that long ancestry—
 Dispossessed of earthly kingdom, exiled from an earthly home,
 With the Church's princes numbered, found he rest in holy
 Rome.

His name and features, together with those of his father and brother, are perpetuated by a stately monument which Canova executed under a commission from Pope Pius VII. George IV., then Prince Regent, contributed £50 to the cost, and somehow got the credit of having raised this memorial at his sole expense.¹ It is a pity that Thackeray did not know this fact when he was writing his *Lectures on the Four Georges*.

¹ See *The Last of the Royal Stuarts*, by Herbert M. Vaughan.

XXIV

LORD'S

FOR men who were educated at Eton or Harrow, and for their kinsfolk and belongings, this is one of the most pregnant monosyllables in the language. "Educated," I wrote unadvisedly; and, ere yet the ink is dry, I feel that the word may expose me to hostile criticism. When Matthew Arnold talked to his Prussian friend Arminius about "our educated classes," the Prussian replied, with his most offensive sneer—"Your educated classes! Where are they? I should like to see them." Perhaps I could scarcely venture to say that, had Arminius been spared to us, he might have seen them at Lord's Cricket-ground on Friday and Saturday last.¹ But, at any rate, he would have seen there the most characteristic products of two famous English schools; and, if he could have read the hearts of the spectators, I suspect that he would have found them peopled with brighter memories than those which pertain to the "Lycées" and "Gymnasia" of the Continent. People who ought to know tell me that the best

¹ July 12 and 13, 1907.

description of a cricket-match in the English language is Mr. Vachell's chapter on "Lord's" in *The Hill*; but, as regards the game to which Lord's is devoted, I write quite dispassionately. In my eyes the chief merits of cricket are that it is played in fine weather and that it lasts a long time, thereby giving occasion for a two days' or even three days' holiday. I have no sense for the delicacies of the game. My notion of a good ball is one which smashes a wicket; of a good hit, that which adds a "boundary" to the score. If Rugby football could be played continuously for eight hours in the middle of July, I would rather witness it than any other athletic exhibition; and even golf, or ping-pong, or spillikins would interest me if the contending parties were two Public Schools. In fine, it is the *certaminis ardor*, the passion of battle, that excites me; and some of the most thrilling moments of my life have been spent at Lord's during the last half-hour of a closely-contested match:—

There we sate in the circle vast,
Hard by the tents, from noon;
And watched as the hours went slowly past,
And the runs came, all too soon;
And never, I think, in the years gone by,
Since cricketer first went in,
Did the dying so long refuse to die,
And the winners so hardly win.
O, good lads in the field they were,
Laboured and ran and threw;
But we that sate on the benches there
Had the hardest work to do!

"It was only by the most desperate personal

exertions," said the *Chef* in *Tancred*, "that I rescued the *soufflé*. It was an affair of the Bridge of Arcola," and his sympathetic *confrère* replied—"Ah, *mon Dieu*, those are moments." Those were moments between 7 and 7.20 on Saturday evening, July 13, 1907. When I say that they resembled the last stage in the counting of the votes at an Election, I have exhausted my power of describing nervous strain.

It is a commonplace of oratory in the mouths of those who profess what they call the "sportsman-like spirit" to express a hope that the best side may win. Much more human, and to me much more appealing, was the manly declaration of Mr. F. S. Jackson at a recent Harrow Dinner—"I like my side to win, whether it's the best or the worst." Mr. Jackson and I (like Lycidas and Milton) "were nursed upon the self-same Hill," and I make his sentiment my own; but, intensely though I feel the joy of battle, there are other elements of interest in the match at Lord's.

There is the element of History, not less agreeable because it fades away into tradition and myth. One need not always "commence with the Deluge," and on this occasion it suffices to recall the first recorded match between Eton and Harrow, when Byron made seven runs in the first innings and two in the second. Perhaps the Poet, like the Critic, "should keep clear of the region of immediate practice." In 1826 Henry Edward Manning, afterwards Cardinal Archbishop, captained the Harrow team, and succumbed to a

catch by Christopher Wordsworth, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, and commentator, in a strongly anti-Papal sense, on the Apocalypse; but this event occurred in a match against Winchester. In 1841 the Eton captain, Emilius Bayley (who was named after a winner of the Derby, and became an Evangelical preacher of great renown), made 157, and beat Harrow off his own bat. In 1851 the present Master of Trinity enjoyed a singular experience of what is meant by a blessing in disguise. When batting for Harrow he received a blow on the knee so violent that play was stopped, and the opposing side crowded round with sympathy and remedies. When play was resumed the umpire whispered in Butler's ear—"It's lucky for you, sir, that you was 'it so 'ard, as the bowler forgot to ask for Leg Before, and you was clean out."

So much for history. Another element of interest in the match at Lord's is its Humour, and of this the best instances have generally been quite unintended. In 1866 Mr. F. C. Cobden (who afterwards bowled memorably for Cambridge) was performing the same good service for Harrow; and a benevolent onlooker, observing the raptures of a little Harrovian, enquired paternally, "Is your Cobden any relation of the great Cobden?" The urchin, who knew nothing of fiscal controversies, replied with conviction, "He *is* the great Cobden." There spoke the true spirit of Hero-worship. At the match of 1888, soon after Dr. Welldon became Head Master of Harrow, Harrow won the match; and a small Etonian, in the bitter-

ness of defeat, said to an exulting Harrovian of similar dimensions, "Well, you Harrow fellows needn't be so beastly cocky. When you wanted a Head Master, you had to come to Eton for him." To which the Harrovian replied, with deadly sarcasm, "Well, at any rate, we never produced a Mr. Gladstone."

A few years ago, I was sitting at the match by a painfully intelligent lady, whose running comments on the game caused me exquisite satisfaction, and her boy-companion pangs not less acute. As she seated herself near the "Nursery End" and fixed her *lorgnette* on the Pavilion, she exclaimed, "What a capital house to see the match from! They seem to let the windows. Couldn't you run across and engage one?" The umpires attracted her favourable regards. "Oh, I see. One is an Old Etonian and one an Old Harrovian, and that makes them quite impartial. What a capital idea! I should never have thought of it." Scanning her card, she observed the word "Captain" in brackets after one of the Eton names. "But I thought they were all schoolboys. Why do they play one army man?" Perhaps the good lady's best achievement was when, after a long piece of "stone-walling," she exclaimed, with piercing insight, "I tell you what it is, that boy means to go on all the evening if he isn't stopped."

The intentional humour of the match naturally takes the form of chaff, and this, though certainly less lively, is also much less brutal than it was in days of yore. Quite courteous, though extremely

malevolent, was the question of a mild-mannered gentleman to a Harrow boy whose patriotism had been rather too loudly expressed. "Can you tell me why everyone always says the 'Eton and Harrow Match'—never 'Harrow and Eton'? Do you think it can be on the same principle as 'Gentlemen and Players'—not 'Players and Gentlemen'?"

Then, again, there is the social aspect of Lord's, and that can never fail to interest the student of human nature. Here, too, I note a change, and this time for the worse. When first I went to Lord's, there was no monstrous "Mound," no Eton or Harrow Stand, no factory-like chimney towering up into the seventh heaven, and not many rows of covered seats. All round the ground were horseless carriages, two and three rows deep. In them were parents and sisters, and on them, perched at every coign of vantage, were Eton and Harrow boys. Wherever the eye could turn, Light Blue and Dark Blue flags fanned the sultry air, and blue-tasselled canes were brandished with aggressive energy. Sarcastic comments flew from carriage to carriage; injurious remarks in shrill tones challenged swift replies; and even gentle ladies did not disdain to say in audible asides: "How *very* old some of the Eton Eleven look!" "Isn't it curious that the Harrow boys are so badly dressed?" Meanwhile beneath every carriage a luncheon was preparing. Coachmen were stirring lobster-salads with grimy hands, and the playful champagne-cork leapt prematurely from its lair. At the luncheon-interval,

the carriage was stormed by London acquaintances and country cousins ; Harry and Charlie on the box beckoned Jack and Will in the crowd to share the salmon mayonnaise and strawberry ice ; while military uncles and half-fledged brothers took a horrid delight in seeing their juniors drink enough to make them insolent and provoking to the other side. Those were grand days ; and the most durable friendship of my life was made at the Eton and Harrow match of 1872. But now everything is changed. Carriages are very few ; and nine people out of ten have their luncheons spread in the "arbour" tents or under the adjacent trees. There is, perhaps, less fun ; but there is more comfort and no disorder. The great majority of the boys drink ginger-beer ; and even the military uncle forswears whisky and slakes his thirst with the mildest claret-cup. Everybody on the ground is as sober as a judge, and the chaff would be deemed innocuous at a contest between ladies' schools. In short, we are more refined and less picturesque than we were forty years ago, but time has made no change in the essential nature of the Eton and Harrow Match at Lord's. It is still what it always was, and what, *pace* the Head Master of Eton, it always will be—a gigantic and joyous picnic, where people who care about cricket can watch the game, and people whom cricket bores can recall, as nowhere else, the most delightful memories of long ago. A happy life, they say, has few incidents. Life at Harrow was happy, and its brightest "incident" was "Lord's."

XXV

THE END

"IN the meantime the world went on, dancing, and betting, and banqueting, and making speeches, and breaking hearts and heads, till the time arrived when social stock is taken, the results of the campaign estimated and ascertained, and the dark question asked, 'Where do you think of going this year?'" These words refer to the Session and the Season, both memorable, of 1868, and the great man who wrote them moralized thus on the sombre topic of The End: "The social critics cease to be observant towards the end of July. All the world then are thinking of themselves, and have no time to speculate on the fates and fortunes of their neighbours. The campaign is too near its close; the balance of the Season must soon be struck, the great book of Society made. In a few weeks, even in a few days, what long and subtle plans shattered or triumphant!—what prizes gained or missed!—what baffled hopes, and what broken hearts!—

The baffled hopes must go to Cowes,
The broken hearts to Baden."

The lapse of thirty-nine years has only made necessary the change of a single word. For "Baden" read "Homburg" or "Marienbad," and Lord Beaconsfield's description of *The End* will serve as well as though it had been written yesterday. "Broken hearts," indeed, do not fall within my ken. In this unromantic age such tokens of sorrow, if they exist, are decently concealed. But in thirty years' acquaintance with London Society I have seen something of "baffled hopes" and "shattered plans"; I know the special gloom which they impart to the always dismal "End." The clouds that gather round the setting sun of a London Season do indeed "take a sober colouring from an eye that hath kept watch o'er" fruitless endeavours and miscarrying schemes — flirtations which looked certain to end in engagements, and matrimonial combinations which would have answered so perfectly if only they had happened to "come off." The spectacle of these sad might-have-beens touches the human heart by which we live and gives us thoughts too deep for tears.

In May 1845 the ubiquitous Samuel Wilberforce noted at Queen Victoria's Drawing-room a worldly matron "playing off two daughters of very great beauty, dressed admirably in a sort of exquisite green with light flowers, and their hair like a mist floating round them, and only girdled by a wreath of lovely flowers, but seeming decked out like victims, played daily, hourly, minutely in this their sweet girlish youth by a very clever, reaching mother for coronets

and a settlement." Poor, "clever, reaching mother"! As July faded into August, unless she had in the too transient interval secured those coronets and settlements, she tasted, as many are tasting it to-day, the bitterness of The End.

The beginning of The End is the Eton and Harrow Match. On the evening of the second day, when the last wicket has fallen, when the usual scrimmage has taken place in front of the Pavilion, when "the tumult and the shouting dies," the aged spectator strolls across the ground, in "pensive," but not in "vacant, mood," for he is reminded only too forcibly by the westering sun and the ever-lengthening shadows that another milestone on the road of life has been reached and passed. Henceforward the brief remainder of the Season contains nothing but degeneration and decay. If we wander into a ball-room the scene is not what it was in May; the band sounds intolerably loud, the girls look jaded, and the boys seem bored; while the sufferings of the chaperones on their bench of penance, borne with unfaltering patience since the beginning of April, have imprinted on their faces a look of resigned distress which would melt a stone. If we turn to the more legitimate enjoyments of middle age, we find our friend's dining-room as hot as Tophet and crowded like the Black Hole of Calcutta. People are wiping off their long arrears of overdue hospitality; women turn faint, men stare and gasp. I myself have sate down, in a hot July, one of forty,

to confront a haunch of venison which a dog would have rolled in.

At this trying period of the social year, garden-parties might afford a welcome relief, for suburban London is rich in gardens, and strawberries and cream, eaten on a green bank to the accompaniment of music, are a form of food which even the fastidious Theodora in *Lothair* admitted to be endurable. But here again the shadow of The End falls heavily on our attempts at mirthfulness; and all over the lawn, under the plane-trees, at the tea-tables, we hear repeated by a hundred tongues what Lord Beaconsfield so aptly called "the dark question." Let us pause and listen to the chattering chorus. "I suppose you are off directly." "This is really the end of all things, isn't it?" "We only stayed on for the State Ball." "No; not Homburg. I am quite sick of Homburg, and we are going to try Marienbad for a change." "My husband is ordered to Aix—such a tiresome journey!—and I believe Harrogate would have done every bit as well." "Oh, no! Woodhall Spa is much the best place; only I believe it is rather dull in the evenings." "Well, thank goodness, we are not forced to go to health-resorts. We are going to Goodwood, and then we shall be at home for three weeks, and then my husband is going to the moors, and the girls and I join him at my married daughter's in Sutherland later on." "What a mercy there's no Autumn Session! If you are coming our way, do let me know. We shall be at home from the beginning of November

on." "Oh, thanks so much. I should love it; but my husband is so difficult to move from home." "Well, anyhow, we shall be coming up when Parliament meets, and it's sure to be an early Session." So the garden-parties fade away, and as we linger on, detained by Parliamentary or domestic duties, The End speaks as clearly to the eye as to the ear. The shutters are up in half the houses in the Square, except on the ground floor, where the housemaid surveys the last throes of the Season through the dining-room window; or in the basement, where the caretaker comes in wiping her lips, and saying, like Mrs. Jellyby's cook, that she has been round the corner to see what o'clock it is. A station-omnibus stands at every second door; mountainous piles of luggage threaten to break through the roof and crush the bevy of giggling maids inside; while unpowdered footmen, reft of all their splendour, wave tender farewells to their "blooming companions" left behind. All the flower-boxes in the windows are dead or dying; the geraniums make a gallant struggle for continued life, but the yellow ghosts of Michaelmas daisies preach only too plainly the Sermon of Mortality.

It has been held that a block of traffic in Bond Street "caps the climax of civilization," and that is true enough when the block is caused by majestic barouches and dazzling motors of the newest mode. But long strings of one-horse landaus, broken-down victorias and broughams from the livery-yard cap no

climax and have nothing to do with civilization, and these are the vehicles which now block the streets of Shop-land. The Summer Sales are in full blast, and there is no surer sign of the approaching End. Ladies of frugal mind are fluttering round the notices of goods at two shillings reduced to 1s. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., like moths round candles or flies round sugar. To the male mind no clear idea is conveyed by "the Popular Flounced Underskirt, with a fitted top of soft lawn, finished with a deep flounce of handsome embroidery, set on by a wide band of beading, with wide liberty satin ribbon run through the beading, and tied in long loops and ends at the left side." But "a Coatee in biscuit or all black taffeta, finished with a simulated pelerine of silk embroidery, edged with taffeta kilting," strikes me as dirt cheap at 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ guineas, the price at which I see it quoted in the list of a sale in my immediate vicinity. Goethe, according to Matthew Arnold, said—

The End is everywhere ;
Art still has truth, take refuge there !

When the End is the end of the London season, the Milliner's Art is the refuge of exhausted femininity.

Truly to-day The End is everywhere. Congregations are fading away and churchwardens shake their heads over diminished collections. When church is over, the "Prayer-book Parade" (as Society Journalists call it) is invaded by "Twopenny Tube young men" in aggressive suits, and the large-hatted maidens to whom their faith is pledged. Riding-masters with

their attendant troops monopolize Rotten Row. The audiences in the Theatres are largely reinforced by "Paper," and you can secure a stall at half-an-hour's notice. The Bore who ravages the Club from February to August is packing his portmanteau with a view to inflicting himself upon his relations in the country. Wherever you turn you see waggon-loads of excited children going to or returning from "A Happy Day," waving flags and munching buns, while the Parochial Workers in charge of the expedition ply their innocuous arts on heated curates in black straw hats. All these phenomena, and others like them, are the signs of The End. They only serve to prolong the agony: I would it were over—"Bed-time, Hal, and all well."

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XXVI

BAPS IN COUNCIL

BREATHES there the man with soul so dead—who boggles at this title and asks, “Who is Baps?” If such there be, let him turn to the 14th chapter of *Dombey and Son* and perpend the narrative of the Quadrille-party with which Dr. Blimber entertained his young friends on the eve of the Christmas vacation. Among the guests on that occasion was Mr. Baps, the dancing-master—“a very grave gentleman, with a slow and measured manner of speaking,” who seems to have been a Tariff Reformer before his time; for he asked Toots, in a quiet talk before the dancing began, what you were to do with your raw materials when they came into your ports in return for your drain of gold. “Mr. Toots, to whom the question seemed perplexing, suggested ‘Cook ’em.’ But Mr. Baps did not appear to think that would do.” At a later period of the evening, Mr. Baps was introduced to that haughty baronet, Sir Barnet Skettles, and put the same question, about which Sir Barnet had a great deal to say, and said it. “But it did not appear to solve the question, for Mr. Baps retorted,

Yes, but supposing Russia stepped in with her tallows ; which struck Sir Barnet almost dumb, for he could only shake his head after that and say, Why then you must fall back upon your cottons, he supposed." After this brief but thrilling colloquy, Sir Barnet looked at the retreating form of Mr. Baps as if he thought him a remarkable kind of man, and shortly afterwards he said as much to Dr. Blimber, and asked if Mr. Baps had ever been in the Board of Trade. Dr. Blimber answered, No, he believed not ; and that in fact he was a Professor of—"Of something connected with statistics, I'll swear," interjected Sir Barnet Skettles. "Why, no, Sir Barnet," replied the Doctor, rubbing his chin, "no, not exactly." "Figures of some sort, I would venture a bet," said Sir Barnet. "Why, yes," said the Doctor, "yes, but not of that sort. Mr. Baps is a very worthy sort of man, Sir Barnet, and, in fact, he's our Professor of Dancing." A truly great man should always have at least one intellectual interest outside the sphere of his immediate pursuits, and I have always held that this disinterested love of fiscal science places Mr. Baps at the head of the profession of Dancing-masters. He has been recalled to my memory to-day by an announcement in the *Tribune* :—

The Imperial Society of Dance-Teachers opened its third annual congress yesterday at the Hotel Cecil, and dancing-masters from many countries discussed at considerable length the advanced technique of their art. The members of the Imperial Society are making a determined stand against heavy odds for purity, elegance, and dignity in the ballroom. They

contend that the art of dancing has fallen on evil days, and requires purifying and elevating to something of the dignity which characterised it in olden times.

The title—"Baps in Council"—requires no further elucidation.

That the Imperial Society of Dance-Teachers has a President we cannot doubt; but his illustrious name is withheld from a too-curious public. The Vice-President, however, has laid aside the high tradition of reticence, and boldly informs the world of the objects which his Society pursues:—

Our aim is not to multiply the number of dances or the number of forms of dancing, but to purify and standardize the dances we have. A very few classical dances were deemed sufficient by our grandfathers, but the art of dancing was in a better state then than it is now. To-day we have new dances introduced every season, which last a season or less and then die out. Most of the older dances remain, but the way they are performed is no credit to the ancient and dignified traditions associated with the art.

When I read this solemn and plaintive plea I could almost fancy that the accomplished Vice-President had been studying *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, which offers a learned argument for the virtues of dancing: "I am of Plutarch's mind. *That which respects pleasure alone, honest recreation, or bodily exercise ought not to be rejected and contemned.* I subscribe to Lucian. *'Tis an elegant thing, which cheareth up the mind, exerciseth the body, delights the spectators; which teacheth many comely gestures equally affecting the ears, eyes, and soul itself.* Plato in his *Commonwealth* will have dancing - schools to be

maintained, *that young folks might meet, be acquainted, see one another and be seen.* Let them take their pleasures, then, and, as Apuleius said of old, *Young men and maids flourishing in their age, fair and lovely to behold, well attired and of comely carriage, dancing a Greek galliard, and, as their dance required, kept their time, now twining, now tracing, now apart, now altogether, now a courtesie, then a caper;* and it was a pleasant sight to see those pretty knots and swimming figures."

That word "galliard" gives me pause. The Vice-President says that "most of the older dances remain"; but has a "galliard" been performed since that eventful day when Young Lochinvar danced off with the lost bride of Netherby? Has not the Bolero disappeared, together with the "Irish Jig and ancient Rigadon" which Byron commemorated, and the "Menuets de la Cour" which Miss Matty Jenkins danced in the Assembly-room at Cranford, before the all-conquering advance of the Waltz—

The only dance which teaches girls to think?

When the heartless Lydia was practising her arts on the love-lorn Horace at the Univerity of Athens, she said coquettishly,

I would have tried a galop with you gladly,
Except for very shame ; you waltzed so badly.

To-day Lydia, even if she were more kindly disposed, would look in vain for a galop on the programme. The accomplished Mr. Brown, who, at

Mrs. Perkins's Ball, said, "You polk, Miss Bustleton? I'm *so* delaighted," would find little scope for his special accomplishment at a modern dance. "The silver horns sounded a brave flourish. Lothair had to advance and meet Lady Corisande." And the stately Quadrille still holds its own in the Ballroom of Buckingham Palace, but finds little favour elsewhere. In "C. S. C.'s" alphabetical account of a Ball we read of

Q.—The Quadrille, put instead of the Lancers.

R.—The Remonstrances made by the dancers.

And to-day the dancers would remonstrate even more vehemently, for the Quadrille at best is a ceremony, whereas the Lancers is a romp. On this point hear our Vice-President:—"It is difficult to find even the most popular and well-known dances performed correctly. Even the Lancers is danced in a dozen different ways. In this dance there is often much rowdiness, such as swinging the lady-partners off their feet in the fourth figure, which is very objectionable, and gives the art a bad name."

So much for Dancing: what about its Professors? "The Imperial Society" has a thought for itself as well as for the art which it cultivates:—

It is the mission of the Society to rescue dancing from its present chaotic state, and the method adopted is the education of dancing-masters. To give the dancing-master some status in his profession, the Society holds periodical examinations, and candidates who pass the test are awarded diplomas of proficiency.

"To give the dancing-master some status in his profession." The phrase touches the imagination,

awakes the echoes of memory, and suggests some delightful scenes. Had poor Prince Turveydrop a "status in his profession"? and if not, why not? No one worked harder or threw himself more enthusiastically into his art. "He sometimes played the kit, dancing; sometimes played the piano, standing; sometimes hummed the tune with what little breath he could spare, while he set a pupil right; always conscientiously moved with the least proficient through every step and every part of the figure; and never rested for an instant. His distinguished father did nothing whatever but stand before the fire, a model of Deportment." Exactly so; and how admirably "Gentleman Turveydrop" would have presided over the "Periodical Examinations" of the Imperial Society! How ruthlessly he would have "ploughed" the unqualified aspirant! With what fascinating grace would he have bestowed the "Diploma of Proficiency" on the candidate who most successfully reproduced his own sublime "Deportment"!

Another Professor of the Terpsichorean Art (I commend this title to the Imperial Society as more adequate than "Dancing-master") who deserved the "Diploma of Proficiency" if ever man did was Mr. Burdekin, who instructed Dr. Grimstone's pupils; nor did the inimitable Mr. Guthrie ever depict a scene of real life more faithfully than when he described the dancing-class at Crichton House. "Young gentlemen, good evening. Take your places, please, for our preliminary exercises. Now, the *chassée* round

the room. Will you lead off, please, Master Dummer? —the hands first lightly touching the shoulders, the head thrown negligently back to balance the figure, the whole deportment easy but not careless. Now, please!" These "preliminary exercises" despatched, the class arranges itself for the Lancers, to a rhythmical accompaniment by Mr. Burdekin, who intoned: "Tops advance, retire and cross. Balance at corners. (Very nice, Miss Grimstone!) More *abandon*, Master Chawner! Lift the feet more from the floor. Not so high as that! Oh, dear me! The last figure over again. And slide the feet, oh, slide the feet! Master Bultitude, you're leaving out all the steps."

When Paul Bultitude, transmogrified into his son Dick, "left out all the steps," he committed an offence which would have been resented in the highest circles. A lady who in earlier life was a frequent guest of our present King at Sandringham, writes enthusiastically of his dancing. "The Prince and Princess set off with their partners—round and round, down the middle and up again, and so on to the end, the Prince the jolliest of the jolly and the life of the party. He was his own Master of the Ceremonies, signalling and sending messages to the band, arranging every dance, and when to begin and when to leave off, noticing the smallest mistake in the figures and putting people in their places. In the 'Triumph,' which is such an exhausting dance, he looked as if he could have gone on all night and into the middle of next week without

stopping. It was a mercy to have a Quadrille now and then for a little rest."

Admirable as are the Dancing-masters of fiction, there have been Dancing-masters in real life not less worthy of commemoration. Such was Monsieur Villebois, who, somewhere about 1750, captivated his lovely pupil, the daughter and heiress of Sir Benjamin Truman, and thereby acquired a principal share in the great brewing firm of Truman, Hanbury, and Buxton. Such was the professor—his name, unluckily, has perished—who imparted the art to Edward Bouverie Pusey, the last boy who learned dancing at Eton. Such, perhaps pre-eminently, was M. Villebois's countryman who numbered among his pupils John Pitt, second Earl of Chatham, and his younger brother, William Pitt. The agility of the elder brother and the awkwardness of the younger elicited from their instructor the memorable judgment—"Monsieur Guillaume n'est pas grande chose : mais Milor Chatham—il ira loin." And so he did—even to Walcheren and back ; but the awkward boy who could not dance is remembered as "The Pilot that weathered the storm."

XXVII

A PROPHET IN THE ABBEY

TO have been a Prophet's schoolfellow may seem a strange experience, and yet I rather fancy that it was mine. "Etymologically"—so learned men tell us—"it is certain that neither prescience nor prediction is implied by the term Prophet. *προφήτης* signifies one who speaks for another, specially one who speaks for a god, and so interprets his will to man. Hence its essential meaning is 'an interpreter.'" It is true that modern England has not, as ancient Israel had, colleges or seminaries where promising disciples might be trained in the traditional duties of the prophetic office; but, for all that, the prophetic gift has not ceased; it manifests itself "at sundry times and in divers manners," it "bloweth where it listeth." It is found by riversides in village meadows; in college courts and gardens; under the smoky skies of busy cities; even amid the strenuous hurlyburly of English Public Schools; and it develops its power all the more freely and effectively just because no one has ever attempted to train it or guide it or shape its course. These thoughts, and others like them, came

to me in a sort of waking dream as I sate last Sunday¹ evening in Westminster Abbey. The choir and transepts were full to overflowing, for the ordinary congregation, always large, was reinforced by a host of Delegates to the "International Housing Congress." A descriptive journalist who reported the service next day said that these Delegates are "a serious body of men"; but their seriousness does not, apparently, take the form of habitual church-going. "The familiarity of unbended knees" was everywhere displayed. When the ordinary worshippers knelt to pray, the Delegates sate glued to their seats. Although the Litany is probably the most familiar of all devotional forms, not a single response emerged from their locked lips; and they stared at the printed paper of popular hymns as stonily as if it had contained the *Dies Irae* or Theocritus's Hymn to Adonis. So far, the service was rather a dismal experience, and one could scarcely fail to contrast the lounging attitudes, the indifferent demeanour, and the muffled voices of the great congregation, with the reverent, alert, and vocal worship which is offered at a popular service in a French Cathedral.

The scribe whom I have already quoted said that the service in the Abbey was, "with the exception of the Litany, congregational throughout, and consisted of four hymns, a lesson, and a sermon." On this I will only remark that, if there is a prayer in the world which is structurally and essentially congregational,

¹ August 4, 1907.

it is the Litany, and that, however excellent sermons and lessons may be, "congregational" is an epithet which can never be applied to them. A congregational lesson would be odd enough, but surely a congregational sermon would recall and rival the confusion of Babel. Last Sunday, at any rate, the sermon was not "congregational," but pre-eminently individual. The Bishop of Birmingham always seems peculiarly at home in the pulpit of the Abbey, where a great portion of his fame was won, and last Sunday he seemed to be in a specially happy vein. He followed the conventions of the pulpit so far as to take a text from the lesson which had just been read, but in effect he complied with Bishop Creighton's advice and preached not on a text but on a subject. That subject—the Transfiguration—was suggested by the fact (which seemed new to the Delegates near me) that the 6th of August is observed by the English Church as the Feast of the Transfiguration. Anticipating the feast by two days, the Bishop plunged straight into his subject. He briefly sketched the historical setting of the mysterious scene, and then at once, in virtue of his "prophetic" or interpretative gift, he exhibited its twofold significance—the Glory which is to be revealed, and the path of sacrifice by which alone that Glory can be reached. Unfortunately, said the Bishop (and here all Christian Socialism, former and present, spoke in his voice), modern and popular religion has placed that promised Glory in a supersensuous time or space called Heaven ; whereas

the inspired teachers of the Old and the New Covenant alike placed it on this solid earth, and taught us to seek it in the quickened consciences and brightened lives of human beings. All temporal reforms — all ameliorations, political, educational, social, sanitary, in the lot of debased and down-trodden men and women — were elements in the making of that New Heaven and New Earth of which prophets and seers had dreamed, and for which Christian citizens were bound, by the very law of their profession, to work and to fight. So far, the Vision of the Glory to be revealed; now came the warning about the path which leads to it. That path, now as ever, is the King's Highway of the Cross; and no one can work acceptably for God and Humanity — no one can follow the Gleam and attain to the Vision — until he has mastered the evil elements in his own moral nature, and can offer the service of a pure heart and a sanctified will. "To you, young Reformer, burning to set the world right" — and here the Bishop seemed to touch the highest point of his prophetic power, — "I apply the searching challenge of the *Lyra Apostolica* —

Thou to wax fierce
In the Cause of the Lord,
To threat and to pierce
With the heavenly sword!
Anger and Zeal,
And the Joy of the brave,
Who bade *thee* to feel,
Sin's slave?"

And then suddenly, almost abruptly, we were brought

down from the prophetic region to the dead-level of daily life ; or, to vary the metaphor, we returned from the Valley of Vision to the world of commonplace and reality. "You, I suppose, are all making ready for the holidays. Don't sacrifice them to rush and bustle. Enjoy yourselves to your heart's content, but try to be quiet and calm. Practise self-recollection. Give yourselves time for thought. Occupy your leisure by cultivating the Vision, and then come back to your appointed work in life with a renewed resolve to take up the Cross and carry it along the path which leads to the predestined glory."

These inverted commas must not be taken to imply literal reproduction of the spoken word ; at best they only express the preacher's sense, but I think they express that not unfaithfully. As the multitude of hearers, who could not follow the service but drank the sermon with thirsty ears, poured out of the Abbey, a vision—though not the Vision which the preacher extolled—took possession of my mental gaze. I saw bright June sunshine on a leafy hill, and a sky of sapphire, and a green stretch of grass, and a half-grown, fair-haired, red-cheeked boy playing cricket with eagerness and excellent form ; and a little later I saw the cricketer transformed into the student, and sitting down with dogged purpose to finish a play of Sophocles before supper ; and, yet again, the student-cricketer merged into the histrion, and rendering the Wall in *Midsummer Night's Dream* with a rough-cast and stone-like immobility which brought down

the house. And so onward, through five years of life in a Public School, I see the same boy-figure advancing from success to success and from honour to honour; and, through all phases and under all conditions, I see the same masculine devotion to duty, the same keen interest in the problems of mind and spirit, the same resolve to use life worthily, the same unvarying witness for whatsoever things are pure and lovely and of good report.

Was I then a Prophet's schoolfellow? I think I was, and I think I have seen the Prophet again to-night. So I awoke, and behold, it was not a dream; for what Charles Gore was, that he is, and one at least of the heroes of our boyhood has not disappointed the hopes of his friends.

It is not the general lot of school-sermons to be remembered thirty-eight years after their delivery. But a few are so remembered, and among those few is a sermon preached by Dr. Vaughan, afterwards Dean of Llandaff, in the Chapel of Harrow School on Founder's Day, 1869. One of the boys who heard it was Charles Gore, and, when read in connexion with his career, it sounds something like prophecy in the sense of prediction. "I would see Harrow contributing, not a scattered, desultory few, but a goodly company, if need be a brave army, of Apostolical men to the ministry of the Church of England—men who love the work for the work's sake, for the Master's sake—men who choose not the Ministry because there is a Family Living waiting for them, or because

they think they can make that profession, that and none other, compatible with indolence and self-indulgence, or because they imagine that a scantier talent and a more idle use of it can in that one calling be made to suffice. These notions are out of date; one Act of Disestablishment would annihilate them. The Church needs men who feel that the Ministry is of all professions the noblest because it is the most Christ-like, and its work the most enviable because the most exactly God's; that in that work alone they can live here below the life of Physicians, Confessors, Saints, in one; do Angels' work and eat Angels' meat. With such men commissioned in her service, the Church of England shall stand though she fall. No ecclesiastical expediencies, no political necessities, no restless, impatient, insubordinate tendencies of an age shallow and confident, can storm or undermine that citadel which is garrisoned by faithful men who had their training in England's Public Schools and then received from Christ's own hand that sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God."

XXVIII

THE CONGÉ D'ÉLIRE

TO the law and to the testimony ! Let us hear what Mr. Justice Blackstone has to tell us about the *Congé d'Élire* before we come to consider its possible bearing on present controversies. "By statute of 23 Henry VIII., c. 20, it was enacted that, at every future avoidance of a bishopric, the King may send the Dean and Chapter his usual licence (called his *Congé d'Élire*) to proceed to election ; which is always to be accompanied with a Letter Missive from the King containing the name of the person whom he would have them elect. And if such Dean and Chapter do not elect in the manner by this Act appointed, they shall incur all the penalties of a *præmunire* ; that is, the loss of all civil rights, with forfeiture of lands, goods, and chattels, and imprisonment during the Royal pleasure."

The sententious Gibbon knew to his cost that "the electors of Liskeard were commonly of the same opinion as Mr. Eliot," though at the worst, I suppose Mr. Eliot could only have turned them out of their houses and deprived them of his custom. No wonder,

then, that the Deans and Chapters of England, menaced with penalties so much more severe, should have been "commonly of the same opinion" as the Crown, and should for three hundred years have elected the Crown's nominee without so much as a murmur of resistance.

But this attitude of acquiescence, prudent indeed, though a little unheroic, was not destined to be everlasting or unbroken. In 1833 the Church of England awoke from a long slumber, like a giant refreshed, and, under the inspiration of the Oxford leaders, soon manifested an inclination to smite her enemies in the hinder parts and put them to a perpetual shame. The Oxford Movement was in its inception what it has always been—a passionate resistance to secular tyranny in the spiritual sphere, and in November 1847 it was roused into violent activity by the nomination of Dr. Hampden to the See of Hereford. Whether Hampden was really a heretic, or whether he was only the clumsiest and most bewildering of theological writers, it is useless now to enquire. It is enough for our present purpose to say that he was suspected of heresy, and was known to have incurred the formal censure of the University of Oxford. As soon as his appointment to Hereford was announced, a storm of condemnation began to gather from all quarters of the ecclesiastical heaven, and soon burst in fury on the head of the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, who, it may be remarked in passing, was quite unmoved by the

hubbub, and, indeed, appeared rather to enjoy it. Rebukes, remonstrances, appeals, and addresses, public and private, secular and clerical, poured into Downing Street in a turbid flood; but the Prime Minister held calmly to his purpose, and refused to "sacrifice the reputation of Dr. Hampden, the rights of the Crown, and the true interests of the Church to misapprehension and prejudice." And now, all other methods having failed, Hampden's opponents hardened their hearts against the terrors of *præmunire*, and resolved to oppose his election in the Chapter of Hereford. The *Congé d'Élire* was duly despatched, accompanied by the "Letter Missive," recommending the Chapter to elect Dr. Renn Dickson Hampden. The Dean replied by a letter to the Prime Minister stating that he would not vote for Hampden. Lord John Russell was a difficult man to draw, and his rejoinder to the Dean was remarkable for conciseness:—

SIR,—I have had the honour to receive your letter of the 22nd inst., in which you intimate to me your intention of violating the law.—I have, etc.,

J. RUSSELL.

On the 28th of December the Chapter assembled for the election—fourteen voting for Dr. Hampden; the Dean and one other against him. So, in spite of all obstacles, he was duly elected, confirmed, consecrated, and enthroned, and died Bishop of Hereford in 1868.

So far, the attempt to change the form of electing a Bishop from a sham into a reality could scarcely be reckoned a success. But, for all that, the action of the defeated minority at Hereford had served as an

object-lesson. It had shown that a Chapter could, if it would, outvote the Crown's nominee, and that even capitular dignitaries might, at a pinch, be driven into active resistance to the authority of the Government. For twenty-two years the question slumbered, and then it was unexpectedly revived by the action of another Liberal Premier. Mr. Gladstone formed his first Administration at Christmas 1868. In the following year, he offered the Deanery of Durham to Dr. Temple, then Head Master of Rugby, who declined it; and then, in the autumn of 1869, he invited Temple to succeed the nonagenarian Phillpotts in the See of Exeter. In notifying this appointment to Archbishop Tait, Gladstone wrote: "I am not so sanguine as to believe that it will pass without some noise." The "noise" proved to be a good deal louder than the Prime Minister expected. Of Temple's personal orthodoxy there could not be a doubt in the mind of any reasonable person who knew him or had read his sermons; but the world is full of unreasonable people, eager to "condemn authors whom they are incapable of understanding, on the faith of extracts which they have not read." Others could not forgive Temple for his connexion with that stale hash of platitudes and errors which was called *Essays and Reviews*. Temple, most rightly and manfully, refused to dissociate himself from his fellow-essayists, so long as the Mitre was, so to say, dangling over his head; and High Churchmen and Low Churchmen, Pusey and Shaftesbury, made

common cause against his appointment. When the Chapter of Exeter met to consider the *Congé d'Élire* and the "Letter Missive," they divided, thirteen against seven. So Temple was duly elected, and resistance to the choice of the Prime Minister was again defeated. When we remember the record of Temple's episcopate, first at Exeter and later in London, we must count it a signal mercy that the opposition failed; but at the same time it is true that the Chapter of Exeter, as on a former occasion the Chapter of Hereford, had given an object-lesson in what might happen should the Crown make a really objectionable nomination.

Bishop Temple was enthroned in Exeter Cathedral in January 1870, and then for ten years no one troubled himself about *Congé d'Élire*. The next occasion, I think, on which I heard the words was on the 1st of June 1880, in the House of Commons, when a private member on the Liberal side moved the Second Reading of a Bill to abolish the form of Election of Bishops, and to substitute for it Letters Patent nominating to the vacant See. The Bill was opposed from the Conservative side; the Government supported the Opposition, and Mr. Gladstone intervened with a striking and memorable speech. He would by no means admit that the *Congé d'Élire* was a mere form. A form it certainly was, but a form which had a distinct value, and which might, on due cause, become a reality. He cited an instance in which Sir Robert Walpole, having nominated an

unfit person for an English See, was so much frightened by the rumour of opposition in the Chapter that he withdrew his nomination, and sent the unsatisfactory nominee to a See in Ireland, where Bishops were appointed by Letters Patent and not by *Congé d'Élire*. He reviewed the most recent instance in which a Chapter had exercised its right to vote on the nomination of the Crown, and he stoutly contended that, though in that particular instance the resisting minority had not been well advised, still the principle of election was of great significance, and that its existence, even when the power was not put in force, acted as a moral check on the Prime Minister's discretion. "Having come," he said, "in contact with the institution of the *Congé d'Élire*, I am by no means prepared to say that, from partial information or error, a Minister might not make an appointment to which this moral obstacle might be set up with very beneficial effect."

These are moderate and guarded words, but they touch the root of the matter. The newly-created Sees, such as Truro and Newcastle, have no legally-constituted Chapters, and therefore, even if the respective Deans and Canons of those Cathedrals had wished to veto the nomination of Dr. Stubbs or Dr. Straton, they would have been powerless to do so. But in the older Sees the Chapters retain their power of electing or not electing intact; and should a Prime Minister be led, "by partial information or error," to make a thoroughly scandalous appointment, an

edified Church might yet see the Dean of York or the Dean of Durham "deprived of all civil rights; forfeiting lands, goods, and chattels, and imprisoned during the Royal pleasure." The glories of Martyrdom are not for Anglican Deans; but here is a tempting opportunity for Confessorship.

XXIX

WILLIS'S ROOMS

"MY dear boy, you must be very quick. You will find the cold mutton on the table." Thus Mr. Turveydrop to his son Prince, the industrious dancing-master, who had to keep an engagement at a school in Kensington at three, and it was now past two. "For myself," added the exemplary father, "I shall take my little meal, I think, at the French house in the Opera Colonnade." Time has laid his obliterating hand on the "French House," and even the "Opera Colonnade" is merged into the commonplace of Pall Mall; but still Mr. Turveydrop, if he could revisit the scenes where once he figured so impressively, need be at no loss to find his "little meal," nicely cooked and prettily served. Where, in his sublunary day, there was one Restaurant there are fifty now, and gentlemen who are constitutionally averse to the "cold mutton on the table" of domestic life can sample a fresh *cuisine* every day for a month, and yet not exhaust the gastronomic resources of the town. My dear young literary friend Tom Garbage (the name is not mine, but Thackeray's)

prides himself, not unjustly, on his exact and curious knowledge of Restaurants and Cafés, Teashops and Taverns. He can balance the merits of "A. B. C." and "Lipton's." He has tested the pretensions of "Pearce and Plenty." He knows exactly how the beef-steak pudding at "The Cheshire Cheese" is compounded, and whether the port at "The Cock" still deserves the encomium bestowed on it by Tennyson. But sometimes Tom's gastronomical instincts lead him in a more westerly direction. Amid the gilding and tapestry of "Ritz's," he rubs shoulders with the citizens of the Great Republic; at the Hotel Continental he cultivates his French accent by discussing prices with the Head Waiter. When his mother and sisters come up from the country, he entertains them in the aristocratic seclusion of the Maison Dieudonné; when his Undergraduate brother yearns to see something of "life," he gratifies that harmless desire at the "Cri"; when his monthly cheque from "Classy Cuttings" has been unusually satisfactory, he realizes all his dreams at the Cecil or the Savoy.

Just now Tom came in with what the French call a face of circumstance. Something had evidently happened, but what? "Willis's Rooms is going to be shut up." I tried to look sympathetic, but, recalling those Rooms only as the scene of philanthropic meetings, lectures on the North Pole, and similar delights, I was secretly at a loss to know why Tom looked so sad. However, *homo sum*, etc., and I did my best to throw myself into my young friend's pensive

attitude of mind. "Ah," I said, with my most reflective air, "another change! *Tout casse, tout lasse, tout passe.* Those Rooms have had a great history. I remember a wonderful meeting there for the Bishop of London's Fund, and a speech from Arthur Balfour on Natural and Revealed Religion, which"—but here Tom, whose manners are more boisterous than polished, cut me short with an energetic interruption: "Bishop of London's *what?* Do you really think one goes to Willis's Rooms for meetings? Rip Van Winkle isn't in it with you." And then it was borne in upon me that, in my fidelity to the domestic cold mutton, I had fallen completely out of the gay, gastronomic life in which my young friend still revels, and I learned that of late years "Willis's Rooms" has been a fashionable restaurant. It happened to have been Tom's favourite dining-place, and it was evident that the memories of its vanished *menus* haunted him like a passion.

Disqualified by my retiring habits from following suit in that direction, I tried a lead of my own, and became instructive and historical. "Ah! well, it's only one change more. Willis's Rooms were famous long before people took to hiring them for meetings. When my father was a young man"—but here Tom burst into an unusually discourteous shout: "Oh! if you're going on about your father, I'm off. I daresay he knew a thing or two in his day, and so did Methuselah. But what I want to know is where I'm to get my dinner to-night; so, as you

don't seem to be going to give me any lunch, I'll be off and bag a table at Prince's ! ”

But the historic sense, once roused into activity, was not to be repressed by ill-timed levity. As soon as Tom Garbage had hurled himself out into the street, I leaned back in my armchair and began to cudgel my brains. “Willis's Rooms,” I repeated to myself, dreamily. “What used my father to tell me about Willis's Rooms? When were they first called so, and who was Willis?” Like the retrospective Cowper, I “sent my memory upon a trip thirty years behind me. She was very obedient, and swift of foot, and at last set me down” in King Street, St. James's, where I found myself walking arm-in-arm with an ex-Cornet of the Blues whose first commission bore date 1824. “Yes,” he said, pointing to a very unambitious pile on the right hand as we walked from the Street to the Square of St. James—“yes, that's Willis's Rooms. They are let nowadays for concerts and meetings and the like, but I knew them in their famous days. Then they were Almack's. Old Almack had a niece who married a man called Willis, and the property eventually came into Willis's hands and changed its name. But in history it will always be known as Almack's.” In history, and also in fiction; for did not Detective Inspector Bucket, when he was overhauling poor Lady Dedlock's dressing-room, muse thus with himself—“One might suppose I was a-moving in the fashionable circles and getting myself

up for Almack's. I begin to think I must be a swell in the Guards without knowing it"? Well, my informant was a "swell in the Blues," and knew it, and from him my history of Almack's is derived.

William Almack came to London as valet to the seventh Duke of Hamilton, and, retiring from service, invested his savings in a Coffee-house or Club at the "Thatched House" in St. James's Street. A little later he moved to No. 60 in the same street, where he founded the Club which became so famous in the annals of Whiggery as "Brooks's"; and in 1765 he opened the Assembly Rooms in King Street which so long bore his name. Horace Walpole describes the stately grace with which Mr. Almack, with powdered head and silk stockings, welcomed his guests, while Mrs. Almack, in hoop and ruffles, made tea for the great ladies while their daughters were dancing. For seventy-five years "Almack's" was the ark and sanctuary of the fashionable world. During twelve weeks in each season a weekly Subscription Ball took place there. The subscription was Ten Guineas; but not ten, nor ten thousand, guineas would have availed to secure your admission unless your candidature had been sanctioned by one of the "Lady Patronesses." In the heyday of Almack's—say between 1820 and 1840—these Lady Patronesses were Lady Jersey (the "Zenobia" of *Endymion*), Lady Sefton, Lady Willoughby de Eresby, Lady Cowper (afterwards Lady Palmerston), the Austrian ambassadress, Princess

Esterhazy, and the Russian ambassadress, Princess Lieven. Theoretically, their authority was equal; but the resolution, energy, and organizing skill of Lady Jersey made her easily supreme. So exclusive was her rule, that, out of three hundred officers of the Guards, only six had vouchers for Almack's; and Lord Jersey was frequently challenged to fight duels with aspiring youths whom his imperious wife had excluded and insulted. One of the rules was that every gentleman must wear knee breeches, and that no one could be admitted after eleven had struck; and Lady Jersey rigidly enforced these decrees even in the illustrious case of the Hero of Waterloo. Mr. Grantley Berkeley (1800-1881) thus described the system which prevailed in his dancing days:—

One of the matrimonial marts in my time was an institution that seemed as expressly designed as the slave-market at Aleppo for the appreciation and transfer of female attraction. It was known far and wide as Almack's—the ball of the day,—held at Willis's Rooms, and was presided over by a feminine oligarchy less in number but equal in power to the Venetian Council of Ten. They were of the highest rank and fashion, some of them relations of mine, and knew thoroughly what was due to them; they were mothers and had been daughters, and therefore fully sensible of the peculiar exigencies of either. With the title of "Lady Patronesses," they issued tickets for a series of balls for the gratification of the *crème de la crème* of society, with a jealous watchfulness to prevent the intrusion of plebeian rich or untitled vulgar; and they drew up a code of laws for the elect who received invitations, which were as unalterable as those of the Medes and Persians.

I have often watched the passing of events at Almack's in its best days with much edification—the evident care taken by the

superintendents of the entertainment that the supply of *débutantes* should not exceed the demand, and the business-like way in which they endeavoured to arrange all transactions.

Though Almack's is thus an historical institution, there are plenty of people still alive who have known its actual delights. Sir Algernon West, who tells us, though no one would believe it, that he was born in 1832, says in his *Recollections* that he used to dance at Almack's, "to which it was said that fashion, not rank or money, gave the *entrée*"; and Lady Dorothy Nevill, who is as lively as the day she was presented, describing the dancing-lessons of her girlhood, says that "in after-days, when enjoying the splendours of Almack's, which was then most exclusive, we often thought of our early lessons, the remembrance of which almost eclipsed the pleasure of taking part in a real ball."

But the fashion of this world passeth away, and Almack's, like the Venetian Republic and other extinguished polities, is only a memory, though a glorious one.

And where is now the courtly troop
That once went laughing by?
I miss the curls of Cantelupe,
The laugh of Lady Di.

When the "courtly troop" had transferred itself to other scenes and "Almack's" name had perished, and "Willis's Rooms," as prosaic in sound as in use, had usurped its place, one survival of the ancient glories of the house still lingered. When the Rooms

were let for an entertainment it was always stipulated that only wax lights should be used. That was a noble touch, and worthy of the Past.

Men are we, and must grieve when e'en the shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.

XXX

THE PENSION-LIST

THE young Disraeli, though he could not speak French, enjoyed a visit to Paris. He used to say that nowhere was a member of the English House of Commons received with so much respect; and this was due to the fact that the House of Commons produces "those dreaded Blue-books which strike terror in the boldest of foreign statesmen." Though myself a true-born Englishman, I share that dread, and I know no more dismal sight than the so-called "library" of the ordinary M.P.—a dingy back-dining-room, where the reign of the all-subduing Blue-book is challenged only by the rival stodginess of Hansard; where Learning is represented by *Annals of Our Times* or Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates*, and Literature by the periodical Reports of the Eighty Club, its dinners and its discussions.

But here and there, swimming rare in this vast whirlpool of Parliamentary nonsense, one discovers an occasional document of real interest and value. Such is the compendious statement, issued by the Secretary to the Treasury, of the National Income

and Outlay ; and in this statement perhaps the most interesting page is that which relates to Pensions. The Pension-List bristles with History. Its very title is suggestive. The reform of the Pension-List was a cardinal feature of Burke's great "Plan for the Better Security of the Independence of Parliament." The proposal to submit the Pension-List to the scrutiny of the Commons was opposed by Lord North on the pathetic ground that "to expose the necessities of ancient and noble families, whose fortunes were too narrow for the support of their rank, to the prying eye of malignant curiosity, would be not only wanton but cruel." The abuses of the Pension-List awoke in turn the good-tempered sarcasm of Charles Fox, the stately censure of Grey, and the passionate declamation of Brougham ; and, indeed, there was abundant and suggestive material for Parliamentary eloquence in an unaudited Pension-List which by 1830 had reached the remarkable figure of £145,000 a year. Lord Acton wrote impressively about "institutions which incorporate tradition and prolong the reign of the dead." Such an institution is the Pension-List, which, even in the attenuated and truncated form to which national economy has reduced it, still bears such names as Schomberg, Rodney, and Nelson ; Gough, Raglan, and Napier ; while the claims of the present are adequately recognized in the honoured persons of Lord Cross and Mr. Henry Chaplin and Mr. Gerald Balfour. The warmest admirer of Lord George

Hamilton or Sir John Gorst would scarcely contend that they were

On Fame's eternal bede-roll worthy to be filed, but they are filed on the bede-roll of the Pension-List, and this, though a less glorious, is perhaps a more substantial, recognition.

One of the most interesting items of the Pension-List is that which assigns the sum of £720 yearly to the Heirs of the Duke of Schomberg. Here is one of those Links with the Past which help us to realize our historic continuity. Thackeray in "The Battle of Limerick" has irreverently coined the name of "Schumbug" to rhyme with "Humbug"; but Frederic, Duke of Schomberg, the comrade and champion of William III., though he could scarcely be a popular character in Ireland, yet richly earned his place in the Pension-List. He fell, in his eighty-fifth year, at the Battle of the Boyne, and his tomb in St. Patrick's Cathedral at Dublin bears this notable inscription:—

The Dean and Chapter of this Church again and again besought the heirs of the Duke to cause some monument to be here erected to his memory. But when, after many entreaties by letters and friends, they found that they could not obtain their request, they themselves placed this stone; only that the indignant reader may know where the ashes of Schomberg are deposited.

Perhaps "the heirs of the Duke" discovered that, with a guaranteed income of £720, it was difficult to exist beautifully, even without wasting money on monuments. Of the Duke's five sons only one had

surviving issue, and that issue was a daughter ; so the Dukedom became extinct. Frederica Schomberg married Robert D'Arcy, Earl of Holderness, and became, by the death of her brothers, heir of her grandfather the Duke of Schomberg. Her daughter and heir, Lady Caroline D'Arcy, married the fourth Marquis of Lothian, and carried the name of Schomberg into the family of Kerr, where it has been continuously borne. I presume, though I do not know, that the present Lord Lothian is the Heir-General of the Dukes of Schomberg, and therefore enjoys at least a moiety of the £720 a year.

We have seen something of Political Pensions, and of pensions bestowed for Naval and Military Services ; but the Pension-List bears several names belonging to the Gentler Sex, and it is difficult to repress the question—Why are they there ? I note, for example, a pension conferred by George IV. on the Dowager Lady Barrow. A reference to Burke's unerring page discloses the fact that her ladyship was niece and adopted daughter of the Right Hon. John Wilson Croker, M.P., and the mystery is solved. Mr. Croker had, as we all know, the singular misfortune to be equally disliked and lampooned by writers so diverse as Macaulay, Thackeray, and Lord Beaconsfield. "The Right Hon. Nicholas Rigby" will be remembered as long as political novels are read. "The truth of all the hullabaloo was that Rigby had a sly pension, which, by an evitable association of ideas, he always connected with the maintenance of an

aristocracy. All his rigmarole dissertations on the French Revolution were impelled by this secret influence; and, when he moaned like a mandrake over Nottingham Castle in flames, the rogue had an eye all the while to quarter-day." But even of Rigby it is not recorded that he secured for his niece and adopted daughter a pension which, granted before 1830, was still paid in 1906. To the same bounteous reign are referred the pensions enjoyed to-day by Elizabeth Brooksbank and Eliza Clutterbuck. Compared with these, Charlotte Paley and Sophia Poussett and Marian Winthrop, who were pensioned by William IV., are quite young women; while the pensioners of Queen Victoria may hope to enjoy their incomes for half a century to come.

The Pension - List is a Valhalla of abolished sinecures. "The Officer of the Pipe" draws £33, 2s. 2d. a year; but the books are silent about the nature and duties of the office which once he held. "The Court of Requests," for the recovery of debts under forty shillings—surely an exquisitely persuasive title,—was abolished in 1847, but one of its officials still enjoys £12 a year of the public money. "The Bailiff of the Marshalsea" (whom a forgetful generation recalls only in connexion with the incarceration of Mr. Dorrit) is passing rich on £50 a year; but the case of the infant Sir Edward Hulse is positively cruel, for he is nominally entitled to an income in compensation "for loss of Post Fines," but the sum actually paid seems to have dwindled to

zero. The secular jurisdictions of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and their prerogatives in matters of Probate and Divorce, were fruitful in snug appointments involving little labour and considerable emolument. These appointments were commonly bestowed on the sons or nephews of the Archbishop, if, like the admirable prelate in *Friendship's Garland* who placed his six nephews on the foundation of the Charterhouse, he "had thoroughly learnt the divine lesson that charity begins at home." Such a prelate was Archbishop Moore, whose son, the Rev. Robert Moore, was Principal Registrar of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury from his schooldays till the Court was abolished in 1857; was pensioned off with £10,000 a year, lived till 1865, and died worth £250,000. When I note in the Pension-List the name of Mr. W. P. Moore, who draws £906 for an abolished office in Doctors' Commons, I cannot help suspecting that the good which the Archbishop did was by no means "interred with his bones," but endures to the third or fourth generation. Doctors' Commons reminds me of the Proctors. Dickens, in his early days as a reporter, made a special study of the various Ecclesiastical Courts which were grouped together under the name of "Doctors' Commons," and described them in *Sketches by Boz* and *David Copperfield*. David himself entered Doctors' Commons, and wooed and won the daughter of a Proctor—Mr. Spenlow,—but Mr. Spenlow died intestate, which did not matter so very much after all, as his total estate

was not a thousand pounds. Much more gracious was the fate of two Proctors who, though the Courts in which they practised were abolished in 1857, are still deriving from the public funds incomes of £1083 and £1571 respectively. Was there ever a Muse of Ecclesiastical Law? If so, to her the pensioned Proctors may apply Matthew Arnold's pensive stanza :—

Though the Muse be gone away,
Though she move not earth to-day,
Souls, erewhile who caught her word,
Ah ! still harp on what they heard.

XXXI

GREAT OFFICERS OF STATE

I ADD those last two words to my title lest the reader should anticipate a discourse about Alexander and Napoleon or Wellington and Lord Wolseley. An enthusiastic civilian glorifying wars and warriors always stands in imminent peril of absurdity; and I feel myself safer in the company of Dryasdust, and more at home in the "cool sequester'd vale" of official life. A correspondent, so vigilant that he seems, like Chaucer's "smaile fowle," to "slepe al the night with open yhe," extols the *Manchester Guardian* as having been the first paper to discover the vital secret that Lord Granard had been appointed Master of the Horse. "As you know so much," he says, "why not tell us more? Tell us all about the Royal Household and the Great Officers of State." Unfortunately, a single chapter will not suffice for the full development of that majestic theme. I will therefore bisect it, and will take the second half first; discoursing here about the "Great Officers of State," and reserving "The Royal Household" for another chapter.

One need not have made a very profound study of

Hallam and Stubbs and Taswell-Langmead to discover that our whole system of administration—political, judicial, financial, military, and naval—grew up round the person of the Sovereign, and had its origin in his requirements and limitations. Thus the Sovereign was the Fountain of Justice; but he knew no law, so he required Judges to administer justice in his name. He enjoyed great revenues; but was an imperfect accountant, so he had need of Treasurers and Chancellors of the Exchequer. He could not conveniently command his fleet at sea, so he appointed a Lord High Admiral. He had neither the leisure, nor perhaps the penmanship, requisite for a correspondence with his brethren in the Family of Princes, so he entrusted his letter writing to a Secretary of State. The offices created by this combination of necessity and convenience still survive, though under vastly changed conditions, and it may not be uninteresting to trace their history and development.

The Lord High Chancellor is, as everyone knows, the first subject of the Crown, after the Princes of the Blood Royal and the Archbishop of Canterbury. His traditional title of "Keeper of the King's Conscience" points to the time when the Chancellor was commonly a great ecclesiastic, such as Moreton and Warham and Wolsey, qualified, by his knowledge of Civil and Canon Law, to guide the Sovereign in delicate issues which lay outside the purview of the Common Law. This advisory function of the Chancellorship fell gradually into disuse, while the

judicial function became more conspicuous and important. When, out of a Secret Committee of the Privy Council, the "Cabinet" was developed, and Constitutional Government as we now know it grew up, the Chancellor always occupied a conspicuous place. It is worthy of remark that when William IV. consented to overbear the resistance of the House of Lords to Reform by creating peers enough to carry the Bill, he associated the Chancellor with the Prime Minister in the permission to create the necessary number. Even to-day, although the King by a recent act gave the Prime Minister a high place in the Table of Precedence, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman ranks after Lord Chancellor Loreburn, and the Keeper of the King's Conscience stands, theoretically at least, at the head of the official hierarchy.

Ignoring for a moment the Prime Minister and his new precedence, we reach the Lord High Treasurer, now only the shadow of a name, but of a name which once was great. If the Keeper of the King's Conscience was an important officer, not less so, in this sordid world, was the Keeper of the King's Purse. He who governs the finances of a country governs its administration; and, as our Ministerial system developed, the Lord High Treasurer became virtually, though not in name, Prime Minister. More than once it seems to have occurred to the mind of the Sovereign that the powers of the Lord High Treasurer were too great and far-reaching to be

wisely entrusted to one man's hands, and so from time to time the office was placed in commission; but, on the accession of a new Sovereign, a Lord High Treasurer was again appointed. So the succession was continued till the 30th of July 1714, when the dying Anne placed the Treasurer's Staff in the hand of Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury, who thus became the last Lord High Treasurer of England. From the accession of the House of Hanover till the present day the powers of the Lord Treasurer have been executed by a Commission, and the first of these Commissioners has been in common parlance "The First Lord of the Treasury." Mr. Gladstone, who excelled in constitutional exactitude, was once asked in public examination, "Are you the First Lord of the Treasury?" His reply was characteristic: "I am one of the Commissioners for exercising the office of Lord Treasurer, and I believe that my name stands first in the Commission." By a constitutional rule, unwritten, indeed, but unbroken from the days of Walpole to the downfall of the Liberal Government in 1885, the First Lord of the Treasury was the Prime Minister. But, when Lord Salisbury formed his first Administration, he horrified Dryasdust and manifested his own originality by attaching the Premiership to the Foreign Secretaryship, and handing the Treasury to Lord Iddesleigh. Mr. Gladstone, on resuming office in 1892—and since his day Lord Rosebery, Mr. Balfour, and Sir Henry Campbell - Bannerman, — reverted to the earlier

practice; but all this time the office of First Lord of the Treasury conferred no rank upon its holder, even though he was Prime Minister. This absurd anomaly, which used to send Mr. Gladstone in to dinner behind the eldest son of a peer whom he had created the day before, was abolished by the present King when, at the end of 1905, he formally recognized the office of Prime Minister, and placed its holder immediately after the Archbishops and the Chancellor.

We come now to the Lord President of the Council, who, in any country which did not revel in anomalies, would be the Prime Minister. His duty, according to the books, is "to attend the Sovereign's person at the Privy Council, to manage the debates in Council, to prepare matters for the Sovereign at the Council-Table, and to report to the Sovereign the resolutions taken thereupon." When the State began to concern itself with National Education and set up a Committee of Council to regulate it, the Lord President became, *ex officio*, President of that Committee, and so, in a sense, Minister of Education. "I know," said Matthew Arnold to a gathering of school-teachers in 1886—"I know that the Duke of Richmond told the House of Lords that, as Lord President, he was Minister of Education—(laughter),—but really the Duke's sense of humour must have been slumbering when he told the House of Lords that. A man is not Minister of Education by taking the name, but by doing the functions—(Cheers). To do the functions he must put his mind to the subject of

Education; and, so long as Lord Presidents are what they are and Education is what it is, a Lord President will not be a man who puts his mind to the subject of Education." If Matthew Arnold had lived to see Lord Crewe enthroned in his present office, he might have modified this judgment; but meanwhile the Board of Education has been created, and the Lord President has been relieved of all educational responsibility.

If the duties of the Lord President, as they stand to-day, are hazy and unexact, even hazier and less exacting are those of the Lord Privy Seal. Writers on the Constitution tell us that the function of the Privy Seal is "to set the Great Seal in motion," and for this rather indirect and irresponsible office we maintain a Great Officer of State, who of course is, in effect, what foreigners would call "a Minister without Portfolio." It is worthy of remark that both the Lord President and the Lord Privy Seal, though they rank after the Chancellor and the Prime Minister, rank before all Dukes; and this rule of precedence sometimes caused social difficulties when hostesses forgot that, say, Lord Carlingford or Lord Tweedmouth ranked, in virtue of his office, before the Duke of Norfolk and the Duke of Somerset. In this connexion I am reminded of a pleasant story which was told me by the late Lord Granville. In July 1860 Queen Victoria paid a visit to her Palace of Holyrood for the purpose of holding a review of Scottish Volunteers. Lord Granville, then Lord

President, was Minister in Attendance. After the review Her Majesty entertained the chief estates of Scotland at a great banquet, and, among the principal guests, of course, was the superlative Duke of Hamilton (whose three Dukedoms of Hamilton, Chatelherault, and Brandon, being contracted in his familiar signature into "Ham :, Chat :, and Bran :," once involved him in the ignominy of a reply from a tradesman beginning "Messrs. Ham, Chat, and Bran, —Dear sirs"). Her Majesty, as she sate down to dinner, noticed that the Duke had entered the dining-room before Lord Granville. No breach of etiquette ever escaped that watchful eye, and in the evening the Queen said to the Lord President of the Council,—"Pray, Lord Granville, why did you let the Duke take precedence of you?" To which Lord Granville made this characteristically bland reply—"Because, Ma'am, I can't run like a lamplighter."

With this authentic addition to the "fashnable fax and polite annygoats" which Thackeray loved, I must bring this chapter to a close. There are more "Great Officers of State," and they shall be considered in due course.

XXXII

MORE "GREAT OFFICERS"

THE author of *Il Penseroso*, when he was picturing the most fanciful delights of literature, wished that he could

Call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold.

A modern and prosaic Milton "calls up" him who "left half-told" the story of the Great Officers of State; and the teller is only too happy to complete his tale. I broke off abruptly with the Lord Privy Seal. I begin again with the Lord Great Chamberlain.

"The noblest subject in England, and, indeed, as Englishmen loved to say, in Europe, was Aubrey de Vere, twentieth and last of the old Earls of Oxford." So says Macaulay, in his heightened and emphatic manner; and though Dryasdust may murmur the names, at least as illustrious, of Talbot and Stanley and Nevill and Courtenay, it cannot be denied that the De Veres were a family of high and long-descended honour. The first of the race with whom we need concern ourselves was Alberic de Vere,

who was constituted by Henry I. Hereditary Great Chamberlain of England, "to hold the same in fee, to himself and his heirs, male and female, with all dignities and liberties thereunto appertaining." This Alberic's son, Aubrey de Vere, was created Earl of Oxford; and the Earldom of Oxford, coupled with the Great Chamberlainship, descended in unbroken line to Henry the eighteenth Earl, on whose death, without issue, the Earldom passed to his heir male. The Great Chamberlainship, being transmissible through females, passed to Lord Willoughby de Eresby, whose mother was a sister of the seventeenth Earl. But the vicissitudes of this remarkable office were only beginning. It remained vested in the Lords Willoughby (who became Dukes of Ancaster) until in 1779 it fell into abeyance between the sisters of the last Duke. By an arrangement between these two ladies, it was settled that the office should be exercised by the representatives of the one or the other alternately in alternate reigns. So, for example, Lord Cholmondeley was Lord Great Chamberlain in the reign of William IV. and Lord Willoughby in the reign of Queen Victoria. But here again vicissitudes arose; for Lord Willoughby, dying in 1870, was succeeded by his sisters Lady Willoughby and Lady Carrington, between whom the moiety of the Great Chamberlainship was again subdivided. The total upshot is that at present the office is in abeyance between Lord Cholmondeley, Lord Ancaster, and Lord Carrington; and that, by the King's command,

it is exercised during the present reign by Lord Cholmondeley.

"It is exercised," but what is "it"? It is the charge of the Palace of Westminster. Visitors who make the tour of the Houses of Parliament on Saturdays do so in virtue of a ticket signed by the Lord Great Chamberlain; and there, so far as I know, his long-descended powers cease. But a generation ago the Lord Great Chamberlain had a duty more specifically appropriate to his title. Until the accession of William IV. it was customary for the King to sleep at the Palace of Westminster on the eve of his Coronation, and then the Lord Great Chamberlain was a chamberlain in the Miltonic sense:—

In the kind office of a chamberlain,
Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night,
Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light.

A contemporary account of the Coronation of George IV. lies before me as I write. "His Majesty's sofa-bed was brought from Carlton House. His Majesty was guarded through the night by the Lord Great Chamberlain and the Usher of the Black Rod. On Thursday morning the Lord Great Chamberlain, at seven o'clock, carried to His Majesty his shirt and apparel, and, with the Lord Chamberlain of the Household, dressed His Majesty. His Majesty then breakfasted."

The next office which claims our attention is that of Lord High Constable, which dates from before the Conquest, and was hereditary in the historic House

of Stafford. There is something vaguely awful (or, as schoolboys would say, awfully vague) in the functions of this office, for the books tell us that "the power of the Lord High Constable was so great that in 1389 a statute was passed for abridging it," but they tell us nothing more. In 1521 it was forfeited by Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, as part of the penalty of High Treason, and since that date it has only been revived for ceremonial purposes on the occasion of a Coronation. At the Coronations of George IV., William IV., and Victoria the Lord High Constable was the Duke of Wellington; at that of King Edward VII. he was the Duke of Fife. In the procession up the nave of the Abbey the Lord High Constable walks on the right hand of the bearer of the Sword of State, on whose left hand walks the Duke of Norfolk, as Earl Marshal. This title and this office alike belong to the history and to the literature of England. Unlike the Great Chamberlainship, the Marshalship was not always hereditary, but in the earliest times was conferred by personal grant from the Crown. In 1483 John Lord Howard was created Duke of Norfolk and Earl Marshal of England, with remainder to his heirs male. "As Earl Marshal his Grace was empowered to bear a golden staff, tipped at each end with black, the upper part thereof to be adorned with the Royal Arms and the lower with those of his own family." This was very nice, as far as it went, but richer boons were in store. "For the better support of his dignity, he

obtained a grant to himself, and to his heirs for ever, of £20 annually out of the fee-farm rent of Ipswich in Suffolk." As Earl Marshal, the Duke was Commander-in-Chief of all the forces of the Crown, head of the College of Arms, and, after the suppression of the Lord High Constable, the custodian of order in the vicinity of the Royal Presence. "'What, my Lords!' said Elizabeth, looking round; 'we are defied, I think—defied in the Castle we have ourselves bestowed on this proud man! My Lord Shrewsbury, you are Marshal of England; attach him of High Treason.'" A less careful antiquary than Sir Walter Scott would probably have written "Norfolk" instead of "Shrewsbury"; but Sir Walter, who seldom made a slip in matters of pedigree and genealogy, remembered that the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury was appointed Earl Marshal on the attainder of the fourth Duke of Norfolk for treasonable correspondence with Mary Queen of Scots. The attainder was eventually reversed, and the Earl Marshalship restored to the House of Howard in 1621. As head of the College of Arms, the Earl Marshal plays a prominent part in the ceremonial observed in the House of Lords when a newly-created peer takes his seat; and in the days when the Duke of Norfolk was excluded by his religious profession from his own place—the highest—among English peers, Sydney Smith wrote, with generous indignation: "Is there a more disgraceful spectacle in the world than that of the Duke of Norfolk hovering round the House of Lords in the execution

of his office, while he cannot enter it as a Peer of the Realm? Disgraceful to the bigotry and injustice of his country ; to his own sense of duty honourable in the extreme."

With regard to the military functions of the Earl Marshal, now for some centuries in abeyance, a more recent incident may be recalled. When the South African War was at its height, the Duke of Norfolk went out, with his Yeomanry, to the scene of action. Just after his departure had been notified, I chanced to meet an officer of the College of Arms, with a face as long as a fiddlecase. "This is very serious news about the Duke of Norfolk." "Yes," said I, in all innocence. "His is a very valuable life." "Oh! that's not the point," replied my friend. "There is a much more important consideration involved. Whenever the Earl Marshal joins the Royal Army in the field, he then and there becomes Commander-in-Chief *ex officio*. As soon as the Duke of Norfolk reaches South Africa, Lord Roberts is under his command. I am bound to say that I think it a very serious outlook"—and I could not gainsay him.

The office of Lord High Steward, which dates at least from the reign of Edward the Confessor, and probably from an earlier period, was once hereditary in the family of the Montforts, Earls of Leicester, but was forfeited by the attainder of Simon de Montfort. The Steward, as Dryasdust would tell us, is a "Stead-Ward," or Place-Keeper—the guardian and ruler of the place or Palace where the King dwells. But since

1265 the Palaces have had to get on as well as they can without the protecting care of a Lord High Steward, and the office is only revived on the occasion of a Coronation or when a Peer is tried by his Peers. Thus the Duke of Marlborough officiated as Lord High Steward at the last Coronation; but on the occasion of a Peer's trial the Lord Chancellor is generally chosen to preside, with the title of Lord High Steward. When the trial is ended, he breaks the white wand which is the symbol of his office and as Lord High Steward ceases to exist. The contemporary account of the trial of Lord Essex in 1600 ends with these words: "The Sergeant atte Arms stood up, saying, 'The Lord High Steward is pleased to dissolve his Commission.' Then the white rodd was broken and the prisoner committed backe to the Tower."

One concluding word about the Lord High Admiral, who from the days of Richard II. commanded the English fleet, but whose powers since 1662 have been generally exercised by Commissioners. A notable exception to this rule was made by Canning, who, on his accession to the Premiership in 1827, astonished the world by making the Duke of Clarence (afterwards William IV.) Lord High Admiral. The experiment was not successful. The Duke comported himself so oddly in his office that in twelve months' time he was compelled to resign. We are much better off with Lord Tweedmouth.

XXXIII

THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD

THERE is a graphic chapter in *Coningsby* describing London in the winter of 1834; when, the King having dismissed his Whig Ministers, Sir Robert Peel was "summoned from Rome to govern England." The scene is a political dinner-party, and a "great noble," unnamed, is discussing probable appointments with a social newsmonger called Mr Earwig. "'I wonder who will be their Master of the Horse,' said the great noble, loving gossip though he despised the gossip. 'I shouldn't wonder if Rambrooke would have the Buckhounds.' 'Your Lordship has not heard Clifford's name mentioned for an Under-Secretaryship?' said Mr. Earwig. 'I should think they have not come to that sort of thing,' said the great noble, with ill-disguised contempt. 'The first thing after the Cabinet is formed is the Household; the things you talk of are done last.'" I have shown that the "Great Offices of State" arose from the personal requirements of the King, and that, in the lapse of centuries, they either were abolished as unduly powerful or were so transformed as to become part of the political administra-

tion. I noted the continuance of two hereditary offices—the Earl Marshalship and the Great Chamberlainship,—and to these must be added the Grand Falconership and the Grand Almonership, hereditarily enjoyed by the Duke of St. Albans and Lord Exeter. Limits of space forbid me to discuss the hereditary offices of Scotland and Ireland. To-day, like the “great noble” in *Coningsby*, I am thinking of the Royal Household.

As the “Great Offices of State” were abolished or transformed, the offices of the Royal Household grew up, and on their holders were cast the various duties which concern the organization and routine of the Court. “Not once or twice in our rough Island story” the rude hand of Reform has been laid upon these sacred mysteries by economists of all sorts and sizes, from Lord Talbot and Edmund Burke, to Joseph Hume and Charles Bradlaugh and living politicians whom it were invidious to particularize. And that in the unrevised scheme of the Royal Household there was a good deal to excite a morbid curiosity I am not prepared to deny. There lies before me as I write an instructive volume called *The British Merlin, for the year of our Lord God 1744, Adorn'd with many delightful and useful Verities, fitting all capacities in the Islands of Great Britain's Monarchy*. Among these “Verities” I find a full and particular account of the Royal Household as it existed under that excellent Sovereign George II., and as, forty years later, it provoked the reforming zeal of the indignant Burke. I omit from my purview all the offices which, by

virtue of their proved utility, have been allowed to exist unto the present day, and I note only those which the besom of destruction has swept away. I start, as in duty bound, with the Lord Steward's Department, for the Lord Steward is the prime officer of the Royal Household, and I observe that, in addition to the establishment over which he still presides, he enjoyed in 1744 the assistance of a "Cofferer of the Household," who had £2000 a year, and a Deputy Cofferer, four "Clerks of the Green Cloth" at £300 a year, and four clerks to the Clerks. The "Accompting House" was served by two Yeomen, two Grooms, and two Messengers; the Bake-House by a Clerk, a Yeoman, and two Grooms; and the Buttery by a "Gentleman," a Yeoman, and three Grooms. The "Acatery" (what is an acatery?) had a Serjeant, a "Sole Clerk," a Yeoman, and two Grooms; the "Scalding Office" a similar staff, and the Wood-Yard a much larger one. The arrangements of the "Privy Kitchen" were singularly generous. There were two "Clerks of the Kitchen," and each had a clerk under him. There were three "Master Cooks," a "Yeoman of the Mouth," assisted by a "Bread-bearer"; five Yeomen of the Kitchen, nine Grooms of the Kitchen, and six "Children of the Kitchen"—delightful title,—whose modest services were recompensed with £40 a year; a Yeoman and two Grooms of the Pastry, and a "Child of the Pastry," who must have had a happy life.

In the office of the Lord Chamberlain there were

four Cupbearers at £33, 6s. 8d. a year, four Carvers at the same rate, and four "Gentlemen Sewers"; there were six "Sewers of the Great Chamber," and two "Coffer-Bearers." The "Removing Wardrobe" was engineered by a Yeoman, two Grooms, and three Pages, and there was a "Standing Wardrobe-Keeper" at each of the Royal residences. The "Principal Master of the Revels" had £400 a year, his Deputy £200, and the Deputy's assistant only £10. Compared with this pittance, the Ratkiller's £48, 3s. 4d. a year was wealth, and put to shame the "Confessor to His Majesty's Household," who, though his office, if conscientiously fulfilled, could have been no sinecure, was fobbed off with £36, 10s. a year.

These, and a hundred others like them, were the institutions which, as Lord Acton said, "incorporated tradition" and prolonged the reign of Feudalism, wasted the national substance, and roused the ire of patriots and reformers. Foremost among these was Charles, Lord Talbot, who in 1761 was appointed Lord Steward of the Household, and seriously applied himself to the task of reforming the complicated and multiform abuses which had accumulated in and around the Palace. "No man," said Burke, "ever entered into His Majesty's service with a more clear integrity or with more zeal and affection for the interest of his master. Economy was announced as a maxim of the reign. In 1777 Lord Talbot told the House of Lords that he had attempted to reduce the charges of the King's tables and kitchen. The thing,

sir, was not below him." But Talbot's praiseworthy attempts at reformation made shipwreck on an unsuspected rock. "His department became more expensive than ever ; the debts accumulated. Why ? It was truly from a cause which, though perfectly adequate to the effect, one would not have instantly guessed. It was because the Turnspit in the King's kitchen was a member of Parliament." Thus Burke in moving his Plan for Economical Reform in 1780 ; and Mr. Morley, commenting on the unsuspected Turnspit, says :—" This office, and numbers of others exactly like it, existed solely because the House of Commons was crowded with venal men. The post of Royal Scullion meant a vote that could be relied upon under every circumstance and in all emergencies. And each incumbent of such an office felt his honour and interests concerned in the defence of all other offices of the same scandalous description." Such was the condition of affairs when Burke addressed himself to the task which had proved too onerous for Talbot twenty years before, and faced with undaunted front the shocked anger of the King's Turnspit and his congeners. In his own pictorial phrase, the Royal Household had "lost all that was stately and venerable in its antique manners, without retrenching anything of the cumbrous charge of a Gothic establishment." It had "shrunk into the polished littleness of modern elegance and personal accommodation," and had condensed "tuns of ancient pomp into a vial of modern luxury." The reform of all this profligate

expenditure, and the curtailment of the charges for the Royal Household, were achievements on which Burke looked back, at the end of his stirring life, with reasonable pride. As remodelled at his suggestion and under his influence, the Royal Household has remained substantially unaltered for a century and a quarter. Each accession has brought with it some slight modifications, all tending, in their degree, to obliterate the traces of Feudalism (which revive only at the Coronation), and to embody the more modern ideas of comfort and efficiency. A sort of half-way house between the *British Merlin*, which I quoted above, and *Whitaker's Almanack* for 1907 is the Royal Kalendar for 1835, which happens to have found a lodgment among my books. It marks, on every page, an era of transition. The Yeoman of the Mouth still holds his own, though with difficulty; but the Master of the Revels has danced away, and the Sewers have vanished from the Great Chamber, and the Child of the Pastry has stolen his last tartlet; and, though the Confessor of the Household still exists, a hideous blank after his name represents his abolished salary.

These desultory reflections on officers and offices began with the Master of the Horse, and with the Master of the Horse they shall end. One of Queen Victoria's earliest appearances in public after her accession was at the prorogation of Parliament, July 17, 1837. Lord Albemarle, then Master of the Horse, claimed an official right to travel in the State Coach

with the Queen. The Queen demurred, as she wished to have only ladies with her. Lord Albemarle persisted. At length Her Majesty said: "You had better consult the Duke of Wellington; he understands all these official rights and duties." To the Duke Lord Albemarle accordingly repaired, stated his claim, and received this reply: "The Queen can make you go inside the Coach, or outside the Coach, or run behind, like a d——d Tinker's dog."

XXXIV

LORD BEACONSFIELD

WHEN Lord Beaconsfield's statue was erected in Westminster Abbey, a Tory chieftain, who had followed him grudgingly and of necessity, suggested this inscription—"Twice Prime Minister of England, and once a Scrivener's Clerk." The fact indicated in that second clause has its relevance to the literary no less than to the political history of this extraordinary man. In 1826 he "appeared full-orbed above the horizon" as author of *Vivian Grey*. So appeared Bulwer-Lytton with *Pelham*, and Macaulay with his Essay on Milton, and Dickens with *Sketches by Boz*. But Lytton was twenty-five years old; Macaulay was twenty-four; Dickens twenty-five; whereas Benjamin Disraeli had only just struck twenty-one. Again, Lytton had been from his earliest youth familiar with the fashionable life which he described. Macaulay had already acquired about ten times the stock of literature and learning which suffices most educated men for a lifetime. Dickens drew every character and every incident from the resources of a miserable but most instructive experi-

ence. Disraeli, just out of his teens, and only conversant with life as it is lived in a Unitarian Boarding-school and a Solicitor's office, burst into a social and political romance full of splendour and sparkle and satire, humorous characterization, epigrammatic judgment, and far-reaching theory. "My boy Ben describe a duke?" cried the elder Disraeli. "Why, he has never seen one." "Books written by boys," wrote the younger Disraeli in later life, "which pretend to give a picture of manners and to deal in knowledge of human nature, must necessarily be founded on affectation." This self-depreciation is pretty, though not, perhaps, characteristic. But what Lord Beaconsfield belittled as affectation was really genius. In *Vivian Grey* he described not what he had seen but what he had imagined, and the creative faculty lifts its possessor far above the level of mere cleverness.

In honour of the hundredth anniversary of Lord Beaconsfield's birth, Mr. Langdon-Davies reprinted *Vivian Grey*, *Coningsby*, *Sybil*, and *Tancred*, and grouped them under the general title of *Young England*. The inclusion of *Vivian Grey* in the group was perhaps a little arbitrary, but the editor justified it on the ground that *Vivian Grey* foreshadows what the later trilogy expounds. Be this as it may, it is an amazingly brilliant and vivacious piece of work. Together with its successor, *Contarini Fleming*, it gives us a rather glorified autobiography of the author, with his precocious development, his

boundless ambitions, his bitter discontent at the conditions of his social lot, his early-formed determination, at whatever cost and by whatever method, to "break his birth's invidious bar." Froude says that *Vivian Grey*, however absurd in its plot and glaring in its affectations, revealed at once that a new writer had started into being who would make his mark on men and things.

The central figure is the author himself, caricaturing his own impertinence and bringing on his head deserved retribution ; but the sarcasm, the strength of hand, the audacious personalities, caught the attention of the public and gave him at once the notoriety which he desired. Disraeli, like Byron, went to bed a nameless youth of twenty, and woke to find himself famous.

The startling success of *Vivian Grey* tempted Disraeli to publish a Second Part. In this he leads his reader from the scenes and characters of English life to those of a foreign and mysterious region, and we exchange, greatly to our loss, the fun and frolic and sarcasm of the First Part for a hash of crazy politics and nebulous philosophy. *The Young Duke* came next—an absurdly overwrought and rather vulgar picture of aristocratic society as it appeared to the enraptured vision of the lawyer's clerk at his desk in Old Jewry. Then followed, in quick succession, three light satires, partly social, partly political, cast in a highly imaginative form. *Ixion in Heaven* is founded on the story of the King of Thessaly, who was carried to Olympus and fell in love with the Queen of the Gods; *The Infernal Marriage* on the Rape of Proserpine ; *Popanilla* on Gulliver's Travels.

In these three freaks of fancy Disraeli revealed most of his few serious convictions, and Froude, no over-indulgent critic, pronounced their "matter, style, and manner equally admirable." *Contarini Fleming* was a fragment of veiled autobiography intended to supplement the self-portraiture of *Vivian Grey*. "Contarini is Disraeli himself in the sick period of undetermined energies." *Alroy* is simply an Oriental tale of vivid imagination inspired by his recent travels in the East. *Henrietta Temple* is a curiously stilted love-story, enriched by lifelike portraits of Count d'Orsay and of the old Lady Cork who figures so drolly in all the social memoirs of her period. *Venetia* is an elaborate and sympathetic attempt to portray the loves and lives of Byron, Shelley, and Lady Caroline Lamb.

So far I have touched Lord Beaconsfield's novels very lightly, for, though in some respects wonderful feats of precocious talent, they are too flimsy and unsubstantial for heavy handling. We now approach the period of his serious writing, and henceforward his novels demand more careful attention. Disraeli was now a Member of Parliament, having been returned for Maidstone in 1837. He had thus begun to realize the ambitious dreams of his brooding youth. He had, after some tergiversations, cast in his lot with the Tory party. He had made his mark in Parliament. He had aspired to, and failed to obtain, political office. He had discerned the growing unpopularity of Sir Robert Peel. He had married a

lady with a jointure, and had become a personage in society. He had acquired a wide and varied experience of life, and had provided himself with the raw material of his most important books. Young or old, it was impossible for him to write without imagination, ideality, and romance; but henceforward those more spiritual qualities were combined in his writing with an accurate knowledge of important and sometimes unrecognized facts. The central figure of *Coningsby* is that Marquis of Hertford whom Thackeray drew as Lord Steyne. He was, alike in actual life and in fiction, a man of imperious will, of unrestrained self-indulgence, enormous wealth, and of a parliamentary influence which made him one of the great powers of the State. The gist of the book is that this despotic magnifico determines to put his grandson, Harry Coningsby, into Parliament, and then finds, to his disgust, that the boy has lost all faith in Toryism as represented by Sir Robert Peel, and is dreaming of new combinations. He contemns Parliamentary representation as "the happy device of a ruder age to which it was admirably adapted." It exhibits symptoms of decay, and, according to the patriotic ideal of "Young England," it is to be replaced by the personal authority of the Sovereign, backed by a territorial nobility, sanctioned by a theocratic Church, and exercising benevolent despotism over a contented but unrepresented commonalty.

Next year came *Sybil*—remarkable as the only book in which Disraeli exhibited, apparently with

conviction, a really high ideal of social and civil duty. It is a story of "The Two Nations"; those nations are the Rich and the Poor. The brutality of capitalists, the tyranny of ground-landlords, the miseries endured in unreformed factories, the squalor and horror of life in the crowded quarters of great industrial centres, make the darker and larger portion of the book. Salvation is found in the humanitarian zeal of a young aristocrat, and a clergyman who has imbibed the principles of the Oxford Movement. "The claims of the future are represented by suffering millions, and the youth of a nation are the Trustees of Posterity."

Tancred was the third book of the group which Disraeli himself called his trilogy. Its inspiration is entirely religious. Disraeli, though a baptized and communicant member of the Church of England, was a Jew to his innermost fibre. He was an absolutely convinced and consistent Theist, held all materialistic theories of the universe in equal contempt and detestation, and regarded Christianity as merely a developed form of Judaism. *Tancred*, the hero, an ecclesiastical Coningsby, the eldest son of a pre-eminent duke, is disgusted by the unrealities of life in modern England, longs to know what he ought to believe and what he ought to do, and is convinced that the Holy Sepulchre is the spot where he can seek divine illumination with best hope of success. He reaches the sacred soil, and passes through many and strange vicissitudes of religious experience. To what conclusion he would ultimately have been led we shall never know, for,

just when the spiritual plot was thickening round him, his father and mother came post haste from England, eager to reclaim their son for convention and commonplace. "At this moment a shout was heard, repeated, and increased; soon the sound of many voices and the tramp of persons approaching. The Duke and Duchess of Bellamont had arrived at Jerusalem."

And now Disraeli laid down the pen of the novelist, and did not resume it for more than twenty years. Meanwhile he had entered office for the first time. He had been Chancellor of the Exchequer, Leader of the House of Commons in Government and in Opposition, and Prime Minister. As soon as he was driven from office at Christmas, 1868, he set to work on a new novel. It burst upon the astonished world early in 1870. No ex-Premier of England had ever written a novel, and curiosity was keenly excited. The success of *Lothair* was instantaneous and astonishing. "The pecuniary result," said the author to a friend in the House of Commons, "has been very gratifying." Superficial critics poked easy fun at the social splendours of the book—at the rococo magnificence, at the serried ranks of dukes and earls, at Roman cardinals and Anglican bishops in pink cassocks and cerulean armour, at ropes of pearls and caskets of gems engendered in the hot earth of Asia and crystal salt-cellars a foot high, at young ladies in "titled" hats (which turned out to be a misprint for "tilted") and "bouquets of stephanopolis," and at "the splendid presence of my lord's footmen," who

"obstructed the convenience they were purposed to facilitate." It was truly a noble medley set forth in a meretricious jargon of fine words which yet had an undeniable brilliancy and picturesqueness. And those who had patience to pierce the flummery and get through to the substantial narrative found their pains rewarded. Nobody has ever described as exactly as Disraeli described them in *Lothair* the social machinations of Roman Catholic propagandism, the hidden but most real activities of the Secret Societies, and the genesis and inspiration of the Garibaldian movement. *Lothair* is a vivid and serious contribution to the political history of Europe during a critical period. It was written by a genius in whom imagination and observation were equally blended, and who, as Prime Minister of England, had seen and known the most mysterious transactions of the time which he described.

Fourteen years passed. Disraeli had been Prime Minister for the second time, had become Lord Beaconsfield, and had been driven from power by Mr. Gladstone in 1880. He wanted to buy a house in London and had not the wherewithal to pay for it. He took out of a cupboard the dusty manuscript of *Endymion* and sold it for £10,000. All that need be said about this book is that, taken in conjunction with *Vivian Grey* and *Contarini Fleming*, it completes the author's autobiography.

To describe Disraeli as a novelist was an easy and an agreeable task. To describe him as man is in-

initely more difficult and a great deal less agreeable. In the first place, he has become mythical. That he existed and played a great part we know. But he ceased to exist twenty-six years ago, and long before that time he had withdrawn into a very narrow circle of intimate associates, scarcely one of whom is now left to tell the tale. Meanwhile his fame, his character, his history, have been encrusted with so thick a mass of tradition that it is almost impossible to discern the true features and complexion. Many, indeed, can still remember his merely physical characteristics—the slightly-stooping figure, the mocking mouth, the deep-set, flashing eyes, the corpse-like pallor of the face, rendered all the more remarkable by contrast with curled locks of the Tyrian dye. We can recall the occasional appearances of this weird figure in the society which welcomed it with regal honours, but in which it moved like the ghost of some prehistoric being. We can recall the sonorous tone and studied articulation with which, after long intervals of apparently painful silence, the ghost would utter some sepulchral aphorism, some piercing sneer, or some shamelessly-fulsome compliment. Such “Memory-Pictures” as these are all that remain of Disraeli in society; and though there are more who can recall him in the House of Lords, or even in the House of Commons, with his histrionic airs, his sombre graces, his strange, hollow, reverberating voice, his flashing epigrams, his high-wrought perorations, yet all such reminiscences leave us at an

immeasurable distance from any true knowledge of Disraeli the man.

A phrenologist once said of Mr. Gladstone—"He is at heart a solitary man," and this might have been said with at least equal truth—probably greater—of the famous Israelite whom we are discussing. Nothing invidious is ever implied by this insistence on Lord Beaconsfield's nationality. He was a Jew first and last. He gloried in the fact. He based his whole theory of life on it. His political ideal was an Oriental despotism; his religious ideal was the realization, amid modern conditions, of the laws of Sinai and the prophecies of Judaism. The strange indiscretion of a man professionally bound to the most sacred reticence made known to the world some incidents of the long and painful struggle which closed Lord Beaconsfield's earthly career. It is said that one of his own faith stood by his death-bed, and, as the darkness gathered and the silence deepened, the watchers caught the sound of the dying Israelite's confession of fundamental faith—"Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God."

A convinced and consistent Theist, as I have already said, Lord Beaconsfield lived and died. No other point of his character or mind emerges so clearly as that. But scarcely less clear is his belief in the boundlessness of the career open to human intelligence and human will. It was his deep conviction that whatever a man desires he can attain, and that people who fail only fail because they do not really desire

what they think they desire. A will and a brain combined carry their possessor to the stars. If selfishness means or implies an absolute conviction that a man's own success is the only adequate object of his effort, Disraeli was beyond question selfish. From his earliest utterances till the very last this was the burden of his song. A self-concentrated character can never be really attractive; but it is often found combined with a superficial good-nature about insignificant trifles which deceives even the very elect. Lord Beaconsfield's long life was ruled by the one dominating determination that he should be supremely great—as great as modern conditions permit the most highly-favoured subject of the English Crown to be. To that determination all was sacrificed—ease of body, tranquillity of mind, the joys of a family, the respect of respectable men, and the honour of the honourable. The sacrifice was not offered in vain. The Scrivener's Clerk became Prime Minister of England, and the dreaming Jew-boy of 1818 was the Dictator of Europe in 1878.

In private life Lord Beaconsfield was affectionate, easy-going, facile, obliging. As he himself said of his own Lord Monmouth, "It would be ridiculous to say that his heart was touched, but his good nature effervesced." He lived in a circle of hypnotized worshippers, whose highest joy was to promote his interests and establish his rule and magnify his majesty. For the man who crossed his path, or frustrated his ambition, or opposed his onward march

to the supreme place, a different side of his nature was brought into play. It is not suggested that he enjoyed cruelty for its own sake, or was vindictive or implacable. He was only indifferent to the sufferings which were necessary for his own advancement. He crushed the human obstacles in his path as calmly as Napoleon III. sent his opponents to Cayenne. A phrase in one of his earliest books throws a searchlight on his character and methods. Two schoolboys have been fighting; the one knocks the other down and lets him off without further punishment. "Had I been in his place, I would have despised their petty rules of mock combat, and have crushed him where he lay."

It is more agreeable to recall the fact, accredited by countless testimonies, that, where his own interests were not concerned, he genuinely sympathized with suffering and sorrow; that he never forgot a kindness; that he was faithful in friendship, and loyal to a grotesque but devoted wife whose money had lifted him out of the mire and set him among princes. His friend and brother-Israelite, Bernal Osborne, who also had mended his fortunes by a judicious marriage, once ventured so far on his intimacy with Disraeli as to suggest that Mrs. Disraeli's eccentricities must sometimes be an annoyance to her husband. "My dear Osborne," said Disraeli in his deepest tone, "there is one word in the English language which you do not understand. It is the word *gratitude*."

As to merely negative traits, it may be readily conceded that Disraeli was not profligate, that he

was not avaricious, and that his vanity—enormous and flagrant as it was in early life—was only the frank consciousness of his own amazing genius. Mr. Gladstone, whose passionate conviction and super-human energies hurled Lord Beaconsfield finally from power, declared that his dead rival's political courage was the most remarkable that he had ever known. This tribute, though honestly earned, reminded some of its hearers of a grotesque fragment from Mrs. Disraeli's conversation. "Dizzy has the most wonderful moral courage in the world, but no physical courage. When he uses his shower-bath, I always have to pull the string."

From this rather flippant reminiscence let us turn for a concluding word to Froude's measured eulogy:—

As a statesman there was none like him before and will be none hereafter. His career was the result of a combination of a peculiar character with peculiar circumstances, which is not likely to recur. The aim with which he started in life was to distinguish himself above all his contemporaries, and, wild as such an ambition must have appeared, he at least won the stake for which he played so bravely.

XXXV

A PORTRAIT-GALLERY

Pourquoi ne pas prendre, comme sujet, *Lord Beaconsfield, homme de lettres*? Il faut soigneusement faire la division entre les deux hommes; écrire un article sur Lord Beaconsfield pris dans toute sa généralité, ce serait se donner la mer à boire dans ce moment; tant de questions s'y rattachent. Mais tenez-vous rigoureusement à l'écrivain, au romancier, et vous trouverez un excellent article à faire, très plein, très amusant, et surtout très actuel. Lord Beaconsfield, c'est toujours le même homme, depuis son premier roman de *Vivian Grey*, jusqu'à ce moment où il étonne le Congrès de son aplomb et de son abstention de la langue française. Nos Libéraux le comprennent mal et ils le détestent; je ne l'ai jamais détesté, moi: il n'appartient pas à la famille des Périclès, bien sûr; mais je le préfère à la plupart de ses rivaux.

THE scope assigned to me is more closely restricted than that which, writing in the eventful summer of 1878, Matthew Arnold thus suggested to his friend, Monsieur Fontanès. Even "Lord Beaconsfield, homme de lettres, écrivain, romancier," would be a theme of considerable magnitude. It would require dissertations on diction, plot, and method; on the uses of political fiction; on the poetic vein in prose and the prosaic vein in poetry; on biography as a form of history; and on literary style as affected by the habit of public speaking. For these and similar studies there is no

space at my command. What I have will only suffice for one aspect of "Lord Beaconsfield, homme de lettres," and that is Lord Beaconsfield as portrait-painter.

We have seen that the remarkable man whom, according to Matthew Arnold, people of my persuasion misunderstood and detested, was born in 1804. He had, in singular degree, the precocity of his race; and in 1826 he published, in *Vivian Grey*, a series of portraits as bold and as masterly (though not quite as delicately finished) as any which he drew in the fulness of his fame. But it is a desperately far cry to the first quarter of the nineteenth century, and the interest of young Disraeli's character-sketches has been destroyed by two different fates. Some of the persons depicted were so insignificant that, at this time of day, no one cares to know what they said, or did, or looked like; others were so famous that we know all about them without Disraeli's assistance. To the former class belong William Stewart Rose, and Charles Rose Ellis, and the first Duke of Buckingham, and Lord Porchester; to the latter the Duke of Wellington, and Lord Brougham, and Harriet Mellon, and the Miss Berrys. We will therefore not reason of these, but regard them and pass on, only remarking as we pass that anyone who wishes to know more of *Vivian Grey*, and *The Young Duke*, and *Contarini Fleming*, and *Popanilla*¹ (or, in other words, of what Disraeli

¹ A friend tells me that John Bright was—*quod minime veris*—a great admirer of *Popanilla*, and used to say that he never met anyone who had read it.

thought about the great world before he entered it), can find all he wants in the admirable studies of Mr. Langdon-Davies and my friend Mr. Walter Sichel.

Scarcely more vital than those quite early portraits are the character-studies presented to us in *Henrietta Temple* and *Venetia*. In the former book the chief portrait is "Count Mirabel"; and the original of it, Count d'Orsay, was thus described by Mr. Frederick Leveson-Gower, who, in a green old age, recollected the sayings and doings of 1837 as if they had taken place yesterday:—

Count d'Orsay was a good-for-nothing fellow. He was handsome, clever, and amusing, but his record was a bad one. No Frenchman would speak to him because he left the French army at the breaking out of the war between his own country and Spain, in order to go to Italy with Lord and Lady Blessington; and his conduct with regard to his marriage was infamous.

So much for the hero of *Henrietta Temple*. The ever-green dowager, Lady Bellair, is Mary Monckton, who was Countess of Cork from 1786 to 1840. Her great-nephew, Richard Monckton Milnes, wrote of her in 1838: "Corky has had parties of all kinds; I dine there to-day to meet the John Russells and a world of Whigs." *Venetia* suffers from the fault of over-familiarity. "Not all the banded powers of earth and heaven" can make a novel about Byron and Shelley and Lady Caroline Lamb interesting. Interesting, indeed — profoundly, absorbingly interesting — were their lives and characters; but interest of this kind must be sought in correspondence

or memoirs and autobiographies. It evaporates when it is decanted into a novel. And now we clear a chasm of seven years, and approach the famous "Trilogy" in which Disraeli promulgated to an astonished world the gospel of "Young England." He has himself depicted, with delightful self-ridicule, the commotion which it caused.

"Well, I don't know what it is," said Mr. Melton, at the club; "but it has got hold of all the young fellows who have just come out. Beau is a little bit himself. I had some idea of giving my mind to it, they made such a fuss about it at Everingham; but it requires a devilish deal of history, I believe, and all that sort of thing."

"Ah! that's a bore," said his companion. "It is difficult to turn to with a new thing when you are not in the habit of it. I never could manage charades."

In a more solemn passage the inventor of "Young England" says that it is "a holy thing to see a State saved by its youth." He himself, at the time which we have now reached, was a mature youth of forty; but he had gathered round him some bright and, it must be added, credulous, spirits of a younger age. That most gracious and gallant gentleman, the late Duke of Rutland,¹ was, as Lord John Manners, the sacred bard of "Young England"; and it was his lamented death that suggested the subject of this Chapter. In "England's Trust" he sang the praises of the movement in which Disraeli had enlisted him, and hurled chivalric defiance at his country's foes. What those foes were was never very clearly revealed.

¹ John James Robert Manners; born 1818; became Duke of Rutland 1888; died 1906.

Liberalism, as the authors of *Lyra Apostolica* conceived it in 1836, was one of them, and Manufactures, and Political Economy, and Poor Law, and Dissent, had their places in the horrid band. From these associated evils England was to be saved by the joint action of the Crown, the Church, and the Nobility ; and, when once deliverance was secured, everyone was to come by his own, England was again to be "merrie," the peasantry were to dance round the May Pole, and Mr. Disraeli and his young friends were to rule the roast.

Oh ! would some noble dare again to raise
The feudal banner of forgotten days,
And live, despising slander's harmless hate,
The potent ruler of his petty state !
Then would the different classes once again
Feel the kind pressure of the social chain,
And in their mutual wants and hopes confess
How close allied the little to the less.¹

Such was the bright vision revealed in *Coningsby*, which was published in 1844, and immediately became famous ; but the greater part of its fame was, I suspect, due, not to its transcendental politics, or to those strange perversions of history which so puzzled poor Mr. Melton, but to the brilliant gallery of unmistakable portraits with which it was enriched. Lord Palmerston, writing to his brother on the Continent in 1844, says :—

I send you *Coningsby*, well worth reading and admirably written ; the characters are many of them perfect portraits. You will recognize Croker in Rigby, Lord Hertford in Monmouth,

¹ "England's Trust."

Lowther in Eskdale, Irving in Ormsby, Madame Zichy in Lucretia, but not Lady Strachan in Countess Colonna, though the character is evidently meant to fill her place in the family party. Sidonia is, I suppose, meant as a sort of type of the author himself, and Henry Sydney is Lord John Manners.

Here we at once find ourselves among pictures which have ever since been famous. The central figure of the group is Francis Charles Seymour (1777-1842), third Marquis of Hertford, K.G., known in earlier life by his father's second title of Lord Yarmouth, and remembered by posterity as "the wicked Lord Hertford."¹ He could have been no common villain, who inspired Thackeray with his conception of Lord Steyne, and Disraeli with that of Lord Monmouth; and on whom Charles Greville, no strait-laced moralist, wrote :—

His life and his death were equally disgusting and revolting to every good and moral feeling. As Lord Yarmouth he was known as a sharp, cunning, luxurious, avaricious man of the world, with some talent, the favourite of George IV. (the worst of kings). He was celebrated for his success at play, by which he supplied himself with the large sums of money required for his pleasures. He was a *bon vivant*, and when young and gay his parties were agreeable, and he contributed his share to their hilarity. But, after he became Lord Hertford and the proprietor of an enormous property, he was puffed up with vulgar pride, very unlike the real scion of a noble race; he loved nothing but dull pomp and ceremony, and could only endure people who paid him court and homage. After a great deal of coarse and vulgar gallantry, frequently purchased at a high rate, he formed

¹ The late Lord Houghton once said to me after a rubber of whist in which I had not been victorious, "Ah, my dear boy, the *great* Lord Hertford, whom foolish people called the *wicked* Lord Hertford, used to say: 'There's no pleasure in winning money from a man who doesn't feel it.'" I thought at the time that the "foolish people" were right.

a connexion with Lady Strachan,¹ which thenceforward determined all the habits of his life. She was a very infamous and shameless woman, and his love after some years was changed to hatred ; and she, after getting large sums out of him, married a Sicilian. But her children, three daughters, he in a manner adopted ; though eventually all his partiality centred upon one, Charlotte by name, who married Count Zichy. . . . What a life, terminating in what a death ! without a serious thought or a kindly feeling, lavishing sums incalculable on the worthless objects of his pleasures or caprices, never doing a generous or a charitable action, caring for and cared for by no human being, the very objects of his bounty only regarding him for what they could get out of him.

From this description I have omitted the most salacious passages ; but anyone who wishes to appreciate Disraeli's skill in drawing a scene from contemporary life may advantageously compare his account of Lord Monmouth's death among his gay guests at Richmond with the conclusion of the passage which I have just cited from Greville's *Memoirs*.

Scarcely less remarkable than Lord Hertford himself was his henchman, John Wilson Croker, who, as Mr. Rigby and Mr. Wenham, inspired an equal detestation in Disraeli and Thackeray, and, in his own person, elicited from Macaulay the emphatic judgment—"a bad, a very bad man, a scandal to politics and to letters." Here are the dry facts of Croker's life as set forth in Mr. Boase's invaluable book of *Modern English Biography* :—

"Born in 1780 ; died in 1837. Friend and factotum of the Marquis of Hertford, who left him £21,000 and his cellar of wine."

¹ Widow of that Sir Richard who "was waiting for the Earl of Chatham."

He was M.P. in turn for six constituencies in which Lord Hertford had influence ; Secretary of the Admiralty ; one of the founders of the *Quarterly Review*, and author of some dozen books, one of which—an edition of Boswell—Macaulay slashed to death.

And here is Disraeli's " Rigby " :—

He was member for one of Lord Monmouth's boroughs. He was the manager of Lord Monmouth's parliamentary influence and the auditor of his vast estates. He was more—he was Lord Monmouth's companion when in England, his correspondent when abroad. He was not a professional man ; indeed, his origin, education, early pursuits, and studies, were equally obscure. Though destitute of all imagination and noble sentiment, he was blessed with a vigorous, mendacious fancy, and had considerable reputation for pasquinades which he never wrote, and articles in reviews to which it was whispered that he contributed. . . . He was just the animal that Lord Monmouth wanted. He surveyed Rigby, and he determined to buy him. It was a good purchase. Rigby became a great personage and Lord Monmouth's man.

Lord Monmouth's man—the phrase is ambiguous, and indeed contemptuous ; for it seems to link Mr. Croker-Rigby, in spite of his Privy Councillorship and his pension, with Lord Monmouth's French valet who originally ushered young Coningsby into his grandfather's presence. " Monsieur Konigby ? " " My name is Coningsby." " Milor is ready to receive you." Even in describing the *valetaille* of Monmouth House, Disraeli drew from life ; for surely this valet was identical with Nicholas Suisse, who was tried at the Old Bailey in 1842 for robbing his master, the late Lord Hertford, of coupons for French stock amounting to 100,000 francs.

“For the defence it was contended that the Marquis bestowed the most unbounded confidence in Suisse, who was generally understood to act as agent in certain ‘delicate’ negotiations which the Marquis carried on.”—*Annals of our Time*.

In this remarkable trial Mr. Croker was also involved, and admitted that he had dined at Lord Hertford’s table in company with the *ἐταῖροι* whom Suisse introduced. Really Mr. Rigby was not overdrawn. The ladies of this remarkable circle may rest in peace; we turn to more agreeable portraits. There is Lord Eskdale, drawn to the life from William Lowther (1787–1872), second Earl of Lonsdale:—

This peer was a noble Cræsus, acquainted with all the gradations of life; a voluptuary who could be a Spartan; clear-sighted, unprejudiced, sagacious, the best judge in the world of a horse or a man. . . . The secret of his strong character and great influence was his self-composure, which an earthquake or a Reform Bill could not disturb. He was an intimate acquaintance of Lord Monmouth, for they had many tastes in common, and were the two greatest proprietors of close boroughs in the country.

That last trait bespeaks a date anterior to 1832, but there must be a good many people left who had transactions with the Metropolis Roads Commission before 1872, and can recognize the character of the Chairman, Lord Lonsdale, under the transparent disguise of Lord Eskdale.

Another conspicuous figure in the social life of *Coningsby* is Mr. Ormsby, who was famous for his political dinners; paid so large an income-tax that “Peel quite blushed when he saw it”; and, when people were admiring a bestarred diplomatist, “demurely remarked that he had no stars except four stars in India Stock.”

Mr. Ormsby was the school, the college, and the club crony of Lord Monmouth; had been his shadow through life; travelled with him in early days, won money with him at play, had been his colleague in the House of Commons, and was still one of his nominees. Mr. Ormsby was a millionaire, which Lord Monmouth liked.

When we try to scan this portrait through the accumulated dust of sixty years, Lord Palmerston comes to our aid with "Irving is Ormsby"; but even still we might be working in the dark if we could not again rely on the illuminating pen of Mr. Boase:—

John Irving; partner in firm of Reid, Irving & Co., merchants. Executed a contract for clothing the Russian army, amounting to £1,500,000, 1816-17. M.P. for co. Antrim (which Lord Hertford dominated). Died 1853.

It is a relief to turn, from the rather mundane circle which surrounded Lord Monmouth, to the patriarchal Duke and the gracious Duchess who inhabited Beaumanoir, "placed on a noble elevation," but not in other respects resembling Belvoir. The Duke may stand very well for John Henry Manners (1778-1837), third Duke of Rutland and K.G., and his second son, Lord Henry Sydney, is drawn, with care and sympathy, from the fascinating character of Lord John Manners:—

He was full of church architecture, national sports, restoration of the order of the peasantry. An indefinite, yet strong, sympathy with the peasantry of the realm had been one of the characteristic sensibilities of Lord Henry at Eton. Yet a schoolboy, he had busied himself with their pastimes and the details of their cottage economy. As he advanced in life the horizon of his views expanded with his intelligence and his experience, and he devoted his time and thought, labour and life, to one vast and noble purpose—the elevation of the condition of the great body of the people.

Henry Sydney's neighbour and friend, Eustace Lyle, the antiquarian philanthropist, was of course Ambrose de Lisle, of Garendon and Grace Dieu, whose submission to the Church of Rome in 1824 astonished a world as yet untouched by the "Oxford Movement." Sir Charles Buckhurst, generous, impetuous, and unbalanced, has been admitted to represent Alexander Baillie-Cochrane (1816-1890), still well remembered in society, politics, and literature, as the first Lord Lamington. Alberic de Crecy is a glimpse of the twentieth Lord Willoughby de Eresby, uncle of the present Lord Ancaster. Whether the manufacturer's son, Oswald Millbank (whom we first meet at Eton and then at Oxford), with his "middle height, thoughtful expression, and reserved mien," with "the general character of his countenance a little stern," but capable of breaking into "an almost bewitching smile," was really meant for Mr. Gladstone has never been revealed and is impossible to decide. Sidonia is of course a mere lay-figure, on which Disraeli may hang the drapery of fantastic theories, about the history, capacities, and destiny of the Jewish race.

A contemporary "key" to *Coningsby* makes the hero, Harry Coningsby, a synonym for "Lord Littleton"; by which name is probably intended George William, fourth Lord Lyttelton (1817-1876), who was bracketed Senior Classic in 1838, and was the father of the famous cricketers. But beyond the facts that they both were educated at Eton and Trinity, both were ardent patriots, and both Tractarians, there is nothing

in common between the real Lyttelton and the imaginary Coningsby.

Coningsby was followed in 1845—a momentous year alike in Church and in State—by *Sybil*, which describes “The Two Nations”—the Rich and the Poor—and in doing so reflects both the religious and the political commotions of the time. The hero, Charles Egremont, is Harry Coningsby over again. His brother, the odious Lord Marney, who had grown rich on Abbey lands and gloried in the Poor Law, is simply a type of those oligarchical and prosaic Whigs whom Disraeli so cordially detested. Lady Deloraine and Lady St. Julians may serve for Frances Anne, Lady Londonderry, and Sarah Sophia, Lady Jersey, or any other great ladies of the moment who worked at society and played at politics. Sir Vavasour Firebrace, who believed that England could be saved by her Barons, was Sir Mowbray Featherstonhaugh. Aubrey St. Lys, the Tractarian clergyman, is said to have been drawn from Frederick Faber, the bosom friend, from Cambridge days, of Lord John Manners. Baptist Hatton, the genealogist, whose special art is to terminate abeyances, and thereby restore ancient peerages to Roman Catholic families, represents James Fleming, the great master of Peerage law, to whose curious learning and consummate strategy such baronies as Hastings and Camoys and Vaux and Braye owed their “second spring.” In the portrait of Mr. Floatwell, M.P., one is forced to detect an unflattering portrait of the late Lord Cardwell in his Peelite days:—

Clever, brisk, and bustling, with a university reputation and without patrimony, Floatwell shrank from the toils of a profession, and in the hurry-scurry of Reform found himself, to his astonishment, a Parliament man. He had entered public life in complete ignorance of every subject which could possibly engage the attention of a public man. He knew nothing of history, national or constitutional law, had indeed none but puerile acquirements, and had seen nothing of life. Assiduous at committees, he gained those superficial habits of business which are competent to the conduct of ordinary affairs, and picked up in time some of the slang of economical questions.

It is perhaps just worth while to remark, before we leave *Sybil*, that the catastrophe of the story—the destruction of Mowbray Castle by the rioters—is founded on what was attempted but frustrated, when the “Lambs” of Nottingham besieged the sixth Lord Middleton at Wollaton Hall, in the Reform riots of 1831.

The third book of the trilogy — *Tancred* — published in 1847, is, in the main, a story of Eastern travel. It is said that Lord Beaconsfield considered it his greatest work. Certainly it contains some of his most extravagant theories; and yet, in some points of ethnology and comparative mythology, later discovery has shown him to have been right when the world only deemed him fanciful.

But the scope of the book does not allow much space for contemporary portraiture. Sir Hugh Smithson, who married the heiress of the Percys and became the first Duke of Northumberland, is a character so remote—he died in 1786—that the pomposities of the first Duke of Bellamont, “who was

always afraid of underbuilding his position," are not so amusing as they would have been sixty years ago. But C. J. Blomfield, the politic Bishop of London, who tried to make the clergy preach in their surplices, and collapsed under the resulting storm, lived till 1857 ; so probably there still are people left who can realize the accuracy of Disraeli's description :—

The Bishop, always ready, had in the course of his episcopal career placed himself at the head of every movement in the Church which others had originated, and had as regularly withdrawn at the right moment, when the heat was over, or had become, on the contrary, excessive. He had permitted the Puseyites to have candles on their altars, although he had forbidden their being lighted. Twenty years before he had declared that the Finger of God was about to protestantise Ireland. He had voted for the Church Temporalities Bill in 1833, which at one swoop suppressed ten Irish bishoprics. True it is that Whiggism was then in the ascendant ; and two years afterwards, when Whiggism had received a heavy blow and great discouragement, his Lordship, with characteristic activity, had galloped across country into the right line again, denounced the Appropriation Clause in a spirit worthy of his earlier days, and, quite forgetting the ten Irish bishoprics which only four-and-twenty months before he had doomed to destruction, was all for proselytizing Ireland again by the efficacious means of Irish Protestant Bishops.

Mr. Vavasour is of course Richard Monckton Milnes, first Lord Houghton, and a more lifelike portrait, though touched with caricature, was never drawn :—

Mr. Vavasour was a social favourite ; a poet and a real poet, and a troubadour, as well as a Member of Parliament ; travelled, sweet-tempered, and good-hearted ; amusing and clever. With catholic sympathies and an eclectic turn of mind, Mr. Vavasour saw something good in everybody and everything, which is certainly amiable, and perhaps just, but disqualifies a man in

some degree for the business of life, which requires for its conduct a certain degree of prejudice. Mr. Vavasour's breakfasts were renowned. Whatever your creed, class, or country, one might almost add your character, you were a welcome guest at his matutinal meal, provided you were celebrated. That qualification, though, was rigidly enforced. . . . A real philosopher, alike from his genial disposition and from the influence of his rich and various information, Vavasour moved amid the strife, sympathizing with everyone; and perhaps, after all, the philanthropy which was his boast was not untinged by a dash of honour, of which rare and charming quality he possessed no inconsiderable portion. . . . His life was a gyration of energetic curiosity; an insatiable whirl of social celebrity. There was not a congregation of sages and philosophers in any part of Europe which he did not attend as a brother. He was present at the camp of Kalisch in his yeomanry uniform, and assisted at the festivals of Barcelona in an Andalusian jacket. He was everywhere, and at everything; he had gone down in a diving-bell and gone up in a balloon. As for his acquaintances, he was welcomed in every land and his universal sympathies seemed omnipotent. Emperor and King, Jacobin and Carbonaro, alike cherished him. He was the steward of Polish balls, and the vindicator of Russian humanity; he dined with Louis-Philippe, and gave dinners to Louis Blanc.

For my own part, I have always believed that in the fascinating Lady Bertie and Bellair, with her beauty, her social charm, and her inveterate love of speculation, I could detect a resemblance to my dear old friend Maria Lady Ailesbury, who died in 1893 and was in the prime of her social fame when *Tancred* was written.

And now Disraeli, who had been writing fiction for twenty years, laid down his pen, and did not resume it for twenty-three years. Meanwhile he had passed through some strange and instructive experiences. By his envenomed and successful

attacks on Sir Robert Peel he had shown himself one of the most formidable powers in Parliament. He had become leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons. He had been three times Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had led the House, with triumphant courage and adroitness, through the ever-memorable Session of 1867. He had forced his party to accept from his hands a really democratic reform of the Parliamentary franchise; and for ten delightful though inglorious months he had been Prime Minister of England. The Household Suffrage which he had created in 1867 drove him from office in 1868; and he passed the year 1869 in comparative quiescence. On April 2, 1870, to quote the demure phrase of *Annals of our Time*, "Mr. Disraeli surprises his friends and critics by the publication of a new novel, *Lothair*." Lord Houghton received it with a characteristic gibe:—

There is immense and most malevolent curiosity about Disraeli's novel. His wisest friends think that it must be a mistake, and his enemies hope that it will be his ruin. He told Longman that he believed that he was the first ex-Premier who had ventured on a work of fiction. *If he had said this to me, I should have suggested M. Guizot's "Méditations Religieuses."*

At this point I depart from the chronological order which I have hitherto pursued. Whether the last-published of Lord Beaconsfield's novels—*Endymion*—was written before or after *Lothair* is a moot point. It was published in 1880; and some, who ought to know, say that it was written after *Lothair* was published, and before Lord Beaconsfield resumed

the Premiership; and was then laid aside till he again wanted money.¹ This would assign it to a date between 1870 and 1874, and such a date seems to be indicated by the allusion to "forty years ago" in the twelfth chapter of the first volume. But on the point of fact we must wait till Mr. Monypenny enlightens us; and indeed it is immaterial to my purpose.

Endymion begins with the death of Canning in 1827, and brings us down, as accurately as fiction allows, to the close of the Crimean war. *Lothair* begins in 1866, and ends in 1868. Some, at any rate, of the characters figure in both books; and it will be more convenient to glance first at the book which deals with the earlier period, even though, as a matter of fact, it was published later.

"Dull people," said Abraham Hayward, "find *Endymion* dull"; and we might add that serious people found it flippant. Archbishop Tait wrote:—

I have finished *Endymion* with a painful feeling that the writer considers all political life as mere play and gambling.

The story is certainly free from any serious purpose, and in that respect it differs both from the preceding trilogy and from its successor *Lothair*; but it is rich in social satire, and its portraits are as characteristic as any that the author ever drew.

Hurstley is a photograph of Bradenham, where Isaac Disraeli lived after he had retired from London; but there is nothing in the character of the hero—Endymion Ferrars—which corresponds in the slightest

¹ It is said that he received £10,000 for *Lothair*.

degree with what we know of Benjamin Disraeli; and Endymion's devoted sister Myra, an absolutely worldly and calculating young woman, must on no account be taken for a portrait of the estimable Miss Sara Disraeli. The apotheosis of Myra's fortunes, when she weds a revolutionary monarch, was of course suggested by the romantic story of that illustrious lady who is now the ex-Empress of the French; but here again there are no resemblances of character. The portrait of the Empress must be rather sought in the graceful sketch of Queen Agrippina. The revolutionary monarch himself is drawn with consummate fidelity from the character of Louis Napoleon, first as he lived here in England, and afterwards as he was when he ascended the Imperial throne of France. This portrait is drawn with a minute attention to detail which shows how keenly the subject interested the writer. "Prince Florestan"—for that is his name in the book—lived in Carlton Gardens: Louis Napoleon rented No. 1 Carlton Gardens from the first Lord Ripon, and in the basement of that house the tame eagle was practised in those evolutions which he performed with such signal unsucess when his master descended on Boulogne. Prince Florestan's prowess in the tournament at Montfort Castle recalls the chivalric encounter of Prince Louis Napoleon and Mr Lamb¹ at the Eglinton Tournament of 1839.

¹ At Eglinton the "Knight of the White Rose" was Mr. Lamb; at Montfort he was the Prince, who at Eglinton was the "Chevalier Bayard."

After dinner at the Neuchatels', Prince Florestan plays conjuring tricks, which are watched with curious eye by the Foreign Secretary. "It was evident that he was a complete master of sleight-of-hand. 'Characteristic,' murmured Lord Roehampton to himself."

"You should remember," said Prince Florestan, "that I am the child of destiny. That destiny will again place me on the throne of my fathers. That is as certain as that I am now speaking to you." "I really do not understand what destiny means," said Mr. Wilton. "I understand what conduct means and recognize that it should be regulated by truth and honour. I think a man had better have nothing to do with destiny, especially if it is to make him forfeit his parole."

In the foregoing quotations two names have occurred, each of which requires some further notice—Lord Roehampton and Mr. Wilton. Roehampton is most obviously Palmerston; and it is curious to contrast Disraeli's description of Palmerston when the two men were opponents in public life, with his retrospective view of him when the rivalry had been terminated by Palmerston's death. He likened the living Palmerston to "a favourite footman on easy terms with his mistress"; and the dead Palmerston he described in these admiring phrases:—

The Earl of Roehampton was the strongest member of the Government, except of course the Premier himself. He was the man from whose combined force and flexibility of character the country had confidence that in all their councils there would be no lack of courage, yet tempered with adroit discretion. Lord Roehampton, though an Englishman, was an Irish peer, and was resolved to remain so, for he fully appreciated his position, which united social distinction with the power of a seat in the

House of Commons. He was a very ambitious and, as it was thought, worldly man ; deemed even by many to be unscrupulous—and yet he was romantic. He was somewhat advanced in middle life, tall, and of a stately presence. His countenance was impressive, a truly Olympian brow, but the lower part of the face indicated not feebleness, but flexibility, and his mouth was somewhat sensuous. His manner was at once winning, natural and singularly unaffected, and he seemed to sympathize entirely with those whom he addressed. In private life he was playful and good-tempered, as if he could not say a cross word, or do an unkind act ; yet a very severe man in business. He was a statesman of the old aristocratic school, still bred horses and sometimes ran one, and in the midst of a European crisis could spare an hour to Newmarket. Perhaps it was his only affectation.”

Lord Palmerston’s warmest admirer never drew a more flattering portrait of him than that ; and yet the flattery does not obscure the likeness. Sidney Wilton is Sidney Herbert, Lord Herbert of Lea, of whom his friend Gladstone affirmed that—

A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,
Framed in the prodigality of nature,
The spacious world cannot afford.

Here is Lord Beaconsfield’s description of the same paragon :—

Sidney Wilton was in the perfection of middle life, and looked young for his years. He was tall and pensive, and naturally sentimental, through a long political career (for he had entered the House of Commons for the family borough the instant he was of age), but brought to this susceptibility a salutary hardness. He was a man of noble disposition, fine manners, considerable culture, and was generally gracious. “Mr. Sidney Wilton is a kind master,” said Endymion, who was his private secretary. “Well,” replied Lord Montfort, “I was his fag at Harrow, and I thought him so.”¹

¹ Sydney Herbert was at Harrow, 1824-7.

Baron Sergius, the astute but unostentatious diplomatist, is Baron Stockmar, whose influence on Prince Albert had such important effects on English policy at the time of the Crimean war; and the Count of Ferroll is a most finished and accurate portrait of Bismarck in the earlier days of his great career :—

The Count of Ferroll was a young man, and yet inclined to be bald. He was chief of a not inconsiderable mission at our Court. Though not to be described as a handsome man, his countenance was striking; a brow of much intellectual development and a massive jaw. He was tall, broad-shouldered, with a slender waist.

He was the representative of

What he could scarcely call his country, but rather an aggregation of lands baptized by protocols and christened and consolidated by treaties which he looked upon as eminently untrustworthy.

His object in life was to make this "aggregation of lands" into a compact and powerful kingdom. In forecasting the future he used one phrase which, on Bismarck's lips, became famous :—

My worthy master wants me to return home and be Minister. I am to fashion for him a new Constitution. I will never have anything to do with new Constitutions; their inventors are always the first victims. Instead of making a Constitution, he should make a country and convert his heterogeneous domains into a patriotic dominion. But how is that to be done? There is only one way—*by blood and iron*.

Waldershare is the brilliant and erratic George Smythe, first Viscount Strangford. Adrian Neuchatel is a highly-idealized portrait of Baron Lionel de Rothschild; while Mrs. Neuchatel, with her simple unworldliness, her interest in science, literature, and philanthropy, and her enthusiastic style, is drawn

with equal truth and affection, from Baroness Lionel. One of the most careful portraits in the book is "Zenobia," otherwise Sarah Sophia, Countess of Jersey, who brought Child's Bank and Osterley into the family of Villiers, and lived and died at the house in Berkeley Square from which her mother, Sarah Anne Child, had eloped with Lord Westmorland.¹ I was brought up by those to whom, in spite of political differences, Lady Jersey subscribed herself "Yours affectionately"; and I have been told that all "Zenobia's" exuberant eloquence about the salvation of the country consists of extracts from Lady Jersey's conversation.

Job Thornberry is Richard Cobden, of whom Lord Beaconsfield said to Matthew Arnold in 1863: "He was born a statesman, and his reasoning is always like a statesman's, and striking." Here is the portrait of Thornberry:—

He was a pale and slender man with a fine brow and an eye that occasionally flashed with the fire of a creative mind. His voice was rather thin, but singularly clear. There was nothing clearer except his meaning. Endymion had never heard a case stated with such pellucid art; facts marshalled with such vivid simplicity, and inferences so natural and spontaneous and irresistible.

Another interesting portrait is Nigel Penruddock, who is Cardinal Manning in earlier life. We first meet him as an Oxford undergraduate, next as a Tractarian clergyman, and then as a Roman Catholic archbishop:—

¹ Lord Rosebery's house, No. 38, now occupies the site.

Nigel was changed. Instead of that anxious and moody look which formerly marred the refined beauty of his countenance, his glance was calm and yet radiant. He was thinner, it might almost be said emaciated, which seemed to add height to his tall figure. . . . He was a frequent guest at banquets which he never tasted, for he was a smiling ascetic, and though he seemed to be preaching or celebrating High Mass in every part of the metropolis, organizing schools, establishing convents, and building cathedrals, he could find time to move philanthropic resolutions at middle-class meetings, attend learned associations, and even occasionally send a paper to the Royal Society.

Leaving for a moment the minor characters, one recognizes Dickens in Gushy; a perverted view of Thackeray in St. Barbe; and in Mr. Vigo, who, beginning as a tailor, becomes a railway king, a compound of George Hudson¹ and the founder of the house of Poole. An amusing trio consists of the two brothers, Mr. Bertie-Tremaine and Mr Tremaine-Bertie, obviously drawn from Edward Bulwer-Lytton and his brother, Henry Bulwer, and Hortensius, the Solicitor-General, who, with his "sunny face and voice of music," irresistibly recalls Lord Chief Justice Cockburn. One of that trio carried down to recent times the recollection of the dinner where first they met Benjamin Disraeli: "We were none of us fools," he said. "And we all talked our best; but when the evening was over we all agreed that the best man of the party was the Jew in the green velvet trousers."

¹ Of George Hudson Lord Houghton wrote in 1881: "There must have been some strange ability about this shopman for him to find himself associated with the elder Stephenson in the creation of the railway system of England."

We now approach *Lothair*—in my judgment Disraeli's masterpiece ; and I am fortified by the authority of Froude, who calls it "a work immeasurably superior to anything of the kind which he had hitherto produced." "It opens a window into Disraeli's mind, revealing the inner workings of it more completely than anything else which he wrote or said." But the ground of my eulogium is not exactly the same as Froude's:—

The students of English history in time to come, who would know what the nobles of England were like in the days of Queen Victoria, will read *Lothair* with the same interest with which they read Horace and Juvenal.

No doubt ; but the real interest of the book lies far deeper than the superficial splendour of aristocratic and fashionable life. It is a profound study of spiritual and political forces at a supremely important moment in the history of modern Europe, and the study is made by a man who for two years and a half had watched at close quarters the secret movements and currents which preceded and created the storm. Disraeli had become Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons in the summer of 1866, had exchanged that place for the Premiership in 1868, and had reigned till the end of 1868. During those years both the Roman Church and the Secret Societies had been specially and even desperately active. Disraeli, in his place of privileged observation, had watched the strife and anticipated the catastrophe.

But before we come to the really valuable part of *Lothair*, we must wade through half a volume of tawdriness and vulgarity, only just pausing to note the various characters as they are introduced to us. On Christmas Eve, 1868, John, second Marquess of Bute, had been received into the Church of Rome, and this event gave, so to speak, the impetus to the book. Lothair's Coming of Age is copied with strict fidelity from the picturesque ceremonials with which Lord Bute's majority had been celebrated in September 1868, and the intrigues concocted in order to make Lothair a Roman Catholic bear a close resemblance to those which entrapped Lord Bute. But there the similarity ends. In appearance, character, and tastes Lothair has no resemblance to Lord Bute ; and, whereas Lord Bute succumbed, Lothair emerged triumphantly from his encounter with the proselytizers.

The other portraits are comically accurate. The Duke, who "every day, when he gave the last touch to his consummate toilet, offered his grateful thanks to Providence that his family was not unworthy of him," was the first Duke of Abercorn, whom Disraeli had just raised to the highest order of the peerage. Cardinal Manning is drawn to the life in the following passage :—

Above the middle height, his stature seemed magnified by the attenuation of his form. It seemed that the soul never had so frail and fragile a tenement. He was dressed in a dark cassock with a red border and wore scarlet stockings, and over his cassock a purple tippet, and on his breast a small golden cross. His countenance was naturally of an extreme pallor, though at

this moment slightly flushed with the animation of a deeply interesting conference. His cheeks were hollow, and his grey eyes seemed sunk into his clear and noble brow, but they flashed with irresistible penetration.

Not less accurate is the portrait of the English bishop, whose special object was to frustrate the Cardinal's design of converting Lothair :—

The Bishop was High Church, and would not himself have made a bad cardinal, being polished and plausible, well lettered, yet quite a man of the world. He was fond of society, and justified his taste in this respect by the flattering belief that by his presence he was extending the power of the Church, certainly favouring an ambition which could not be described as moderate. The Bishop had no abstract prejudice against gentlemen who wore red hats, and under ordinary circumstances would have welcomed his brother churchman with unaffected cordiality, not to say sympathy ; but in the present instance, however gracious his mien and honeyed his expressions, he only looked upon the Cardinal as a dangerous rival, intent upon clutching from his fold the most precious of his flock. . . . It was amusing to observe the elaborate courtesy and more than Christian kindness which the rival prelates and their official followers extended to each other ; but under all this unction, on both sides, were unceasing observation and a vigilance that never flagged ; and on both sides there was an uneasy but irresistible conviction that they were on the eve of one of the decisive battles of the social world.

That this episcopal portrait was recognized by the person most closely concerned is proved by the following letter from Bishop Wilberforce, written to a friend on May 28, 1870 :—

Yes, *Lothair* is all you say ; but my wrath against D. has burnt before this so fiercely that it seems to have burnt up all the materials for burning, and to be like an exhausted prairie-fire—full of black stumps, burnt grass, and all abominations.

The book teems with portraits, and some of the

subjects are still with us. Lady St. Jerome, with her graceful presence, her passionate piety, and her inveterate habit of opening Roman Catholic bazaars, is still known and loved by a wide circle of orthodox believers. That there might be no mistake about the identity of Monsignore Catesby, "an agreeable man who talked on every subject except High Mass," his name was once printed in the first edition as Capel. The resplendent and vainglorious painter, Gaston Phœbus, died Lord Leighton. Mr. Brancepeth, who dedicated his life and talents to the art of dinner-giving, was Mr. Christopher Sykes. The gifted and unconventional St. Aldegonde, "heir to the richest dukedom in England," who was for the free and equal division of all kinds of property except land, and for the abolition of all orders of men except dukes, who were a necessity, closely resembles the late Duke of Sutherland. Lord Carisbrooke, fashionable and ritualistic, might stand for the late Lord Bath; and Hugo Bohun, who went everywhere and knew everything and was always on the side of the Duchesses, for the late Sir Henry Calcraft. No one who ever knew the late Mr. Evelyn Philip Shirley of Ettington, author of *Deer and Deer-parks* and of *The Noble and Gentle Men of England*, could fail to recognize Mr. Ardenne, the County member, who "had an ancient pedigree, and knew everybody else's, which was not always pleasant," and "prided himself on being the hereditary owner of a real deer-park—the only one, he asserted, in the County."

These personages and others like them occupy the first volume of *Lothair*. The hero is a peer of colossal wealth, an orphan, and an undergraduate of Christ Church. In the Long Vacation he goes to stay with his friend Bertram, the eldest son of "The Duke," whose title is never revealed. There he falls in love with Lady Corisande, perhaps the most entirely inane young woman whom even Disraeli ever drew. The Duchess discourages an immediate proposal, and during the season of 1867 Lothair transfers his affections to Miss Clare Arundel, Lady St. Jerome's niece, and an ardent Roman Catholic. Just as things are beginning to look serious, and he has made up his mind to give £200,000 for a Roman Catholic cathedral in Westminster, he accidentally falls in with an American lady called Mrs. Campian, who generally goes by the name of "Theodora." Theodora, though married to an American, turns out to be an Italian. Her whole heart and life—all that she is, has, or can do—are devoted to the cause of Italian freedom, and more especially the deliverance of Rome from the Temporal Power of the Pope. Under the spell of Theodora's charm, Lothair forgets all about Lady Corisande and Miss Arundel. He gives the £200,000, which he had destined for the cathedral, to Garibaldi, and in September 1867, being now of age, he leaves England, and, under the name of Captain Muriel, takes a commission in the insurrectionary army of Italy. Here he seems, in a sense, to change his identity; and, having down till now been rather like

Lord Bute, he becomes very like Lord St. Maur (1833-1869), the eldest son of the twelfth Duke of Somerset.¹ He serves under a mysterious general, who is in league with all the Secret Societies of Europe, and who, as General Cluseret, became so conspicuous in Paris, a year after *Lothair* was published.

The most striking figure in the insurrectionary army is Theodora herself, who follows the fortunes of the campaign, sharing every risk and every privation with the soldiers of freedom, and inspiring them by her radiant presence and irresistible voice. Theodora, as Froude justly remarks, is the character whom Disraeli likes better than anyone else in the book. Froude speaks of her as "an idealized Margaret Fuller"; she certainly bears some resemblance to the beautiful Countess della Torre, who accompanied the Legion of 1860; but the governing facts of Theodora's life—her passionate enthusiasm for Italian freedom, and her heroic services in all Garibaldi's insurrectionary campaigns—are drawn from the experiences of Signora Jessie White-Mario, who died only in March 1906, and whose name will be remembered in Italy as long as Italians believe in the unity and liberty of their race.

Theodora was killed by a stray shot at Viterbo, and, in dying, she exacted from *Lothair* a promise that he would never enter the Church of Rome. At Mentana, *Lothair* is wounded and left for dead. He

¹ Lord St. Maur served under Garibaldi as "Captain Sarsfield."

is discovered, carried into Rome, and tended by Miss Arundel. When he recovers consciousness, he finds Monsignore Catesby at his bedside ; and a wonderful hocus-pocus is concocted, by which, taking advantage of his enfeebled and bewildered state, his Roman Catholic friends try to persuade him that he has been fighting for, instead of against, the Pope, and that his life has been saved by a special intervention of the Blessed Virgin. He is fuming over this impudent fabrication in the *Roman Journal* of the day, when Cardinal Grandison appears ; and Lothair bursts out in angry protest against what he calls "a tissue of falsehoods and imposture." Froude, in quoting the scene, affirms that "nowhere in English fiction is there any passage where the satire is more delicate than in the Cardinal's rejoinder." And indeed, as I read it, I seem to catch the echo of Cardinal Manning's voice:—

"I know there are two narratives of your relations with the battle of Mentana. The one accepted as authentic is that which appears in this journal ; the other account, which can only be traced to yourself, has, no doubt, a somewhat different character. But, considering that it is in the highest degree improbable, and that there is not a tittle of confirmatory or collateral evidence to extenuate its absolute unlikelihood, I hardly think you are justified in using, with reference to the statements in this article, the harsh expression which I am persuaded, on reflection, you will feel you have hastily used."

"I think," said Lothair, with a kindling eye and a burning cheek, "that I am the best judge of what I did at Mentana."

"Well, well," said the Cardinal, with dulcet calmness, "you naturally think so ; but you must remember you have been very ill, my dear young friend, and labouring under much excitement.

If I were you—and I speak as your friend, I hope your best one—I would not dwell too much on this fancy of yours about the battle of Mentana. I would, myself, always deal tenderly with a fixed idea; harsh attempts to terminate hallucination are seldom successful. Nevertheless, in the case of a public event—a matter of fact—if a man finds that he is of one opinion and all orders of society of another, he should not be encouraged to dwell on a perverted view. He should be gradually weaned from it.”

“What is said there about me at Mentana makes me doubt of all the rest,” said Lothair.

“Well, we will not dwell on Mentana,” said the Cardinal, with a sweet smile. “I have treated of that point. Your case is by no means an uncommon one. It will wear off with returning health. King George IV. believed he was at the battle of Waterloo, and, indeed, commanded there; and his friends were at one time a little alarmed; but Knighton, who was a sensible man, said: ‘His Majesty has only to leave off curaçoa, and rest assured he will gain no more victories.’ . . . Remember where you are. You are in the centre of Christendom, where Truth, and where alone, Truth resides. Divine authority has perused this paper and approved it. It is published for the joy and satisfaction of two hundred millions of Christians, and for the salvation of all those who, unhappily for themselves, are not yet converted to the faith. It records the most memorable event of this century.”¹

And so on and so forth; but Lothair was proof against all these blandishments; remained unalterably convinced that he had fought against the Pope; returned to England, and married Lady Corisande. There could scarcely be a duller ending.

¹ In old age, Cardinal Manning wrote: “It is curious that the same subject [A Catholic University in Ireland] should have involved me in collision with both Disraeli and Gladstone; and the one should have written *Lothair*, and the other *Rome’s New Fashions in Religion*.”

XXXVI

GLADSTONE

IT was in the autumn of 1898 that Mr. John Morley undertook the heroic task of writing Gladstone's biography. When he had been burrowing, for a twelvemonth or so, in that Octagon Chamber at Hawarden, where his material was stored, some of those who professed to know his secrets went about with countenances full of mystery, and darkly hinted that, whenever the book appeared, it would be found to contain something so unexpected and so startling that even Gladstone's closest friends would be amazed. But the men with the mysterious countenances would seem to have been not quite as wise as they looked, for, when the book came, it contained nothing about Gladstone's personal life and character which all the world did not know before. He lived so much in the open, that there was little room for fundamental misapprehension about his qualities or acts. Even the earlier biographers were not so very far wrong; and the difference between Mr. Morley's work and theirs is rather like the difference between a consummately-finished portrait by Sir William Richmond and a

thumb-nail sketch by poor Phil May. The person presented is recognizably the same. It is in scale and method, background and detail, that you see the difference between the two orders of composition. From Mr. Morley's pages Gladstone emerged as all his countrymen knew him, with his "soul of fire, encased in a frame of pliant steel"; with his profound religiousness, his vulnerable temper, his impetuous moods, his passion for hard work, his consuming sense of responsibility for life and time and power. Some of his admirers, who loved to dwell rather on the saintly than on the secular side of his character, used to make out that he disliked office, and was always yearning for a private life. This delusion Mr. Morley dispelled. No doubt there were moments when Gladstone was disgusted with public life, its meannesses, its limitations, its disappointments. At such a moment, in 1874, he resigned the Liberal leadership. When he touched the appointed age of man, he earnestly desired a period of repose between the close of his official career and the end of life. He thought the interests of political life, "though profoundly human, quite off the line of an old man's direct preparation for passing the River of Death." But these were exceptional and transient moods. His permanent and settled judgment was thus given by Mr. Morley. "Of a certain kind of cant about public life and office Mr. Gladstone was always accustomed to make short work. The repudiation of desire for official power he always roundly described as sentimental and

maudlin. One of the not too many things that he admired in Lord Palmerston was the manly frankness of his habitual declaration, that office is the natural and proper sphere of a public man's ambition, as that in which he can most freely use his powers for the common advantage of his country." "The desire for office," said Gladstone, "is the desire of ardent minds for a larger space and scope within which to serve the country, and for command of that powerful machinery for information and practice, which the Public Departments supply. He must be a very bad Minister indeed who does not do ten times the good to the country that he would do out of office, because he has helps and opportunities which multiply twentyfold, as by a system of wheels and pulleys, his power for doing it." This deliberate statement abundantly confirmed what those who had watched Gladstone most closely, always believed about his love of power. It made his early resignation of a much-prized office seem an act of almost heroic virtue ; and it went far to explain his junction with Lord Palmerston in 1859, his sudden resumption of practical leadership in 1879, and his manœuvres at the beginning of 1886. He loved power, felt his fitness for it, and used it nobly. He "worked the great institutions of the country" for the objects which he believed to be supremely good.

Those who, scrutinizing Gladstone, also revered him, always maintained that, if love of power was the second characteristic of his nature, the first, the

fundamental, and the transcendent, was his religiousness. And this trait stands forth in high relief on Mr. Morley's canvas. At every turn in that long and wonderful career, there is the same strong, vivid, and permanent sense of close and continuous relation with the Unseen Power. It sustains him at all crises of his public life. Throughout he believes himself to be called by God to a special work, and endowed with special strength for its fulfilment. Therefore he is "not disturbed, though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea." Thus, after the momentous Election of 1880—the climax, as events proved, of his career—he writes: "I thought by what deep and hidden agencies I have been brought into the midst of the vortex of political action and contention. . . . I do believe that the Almighty has employed me for His purposes in a manner larger and more special than before, and has strengthened and led me on accordingly." A "new access of strength has been administered to me in my old age." Holy Scripture has been, "in a remarkable manner, applied to me for admonition and for comfort." At every turn the *Sortes Biblicæ*, as they meet him in the daily services of the church, illuminate and embolden him. Apart from his regular attendance at Holy Communion and daily service, and all the stated occasions of devotion, he finds religious opportunities in all nooks and crannies of his time, and some of these the most unpromising. When he is "kept waiting," in society, or business, instead of grumbling and

fretting, he cultivates religious meditation. In thirty-mile walks on the hills round Balmoral, he finds himself specially alone with God. He practises and recommends the habit of "inwardly turning the thoughts to God, though but for a moment, in the course or during the intervals of our business, which constantly presents occasions requiring His aid and guidance." As the end approaches, he desires to stand like a soldier in the ranks, waiting the word of command which shall bid him fall out. He thinks that "to die in church would be a great euthanasia."

No one, however ardent a believer in dogmatic Christianity, could have handled the religious part of Gladstone's life more sympathetically or more reverently than Mr. Morley. "The fundamentals of Christian dogma, so far as I know and am entitled to speak, are the only region in which Mr. Gladstone's opinions have no history." With regard to matters less than fundamental, Mr. Morley elicited the important fact that, through all the Romeward movements of 1845 and 1851, Gladstone's loyalty to the Church of England stood undisturbed and undiminished. "One blessing," he wrote after the secession of Manning and Hope-Scott, "I have: total freedom from doubts. These dismal events have smitten, but not shaken." In a connexion so grave and even pathetic it seems rather heartless to indulge in a smile: but Mr. Morley gave us one quotation from Gladstone's Diary for 1839, which is too quaint and too characteristic to be ignored.

That year he read *Nicholas Nickleby*, admired its "human tone" and "natural pathos" (*N.B.*—not a word about the humour), but added, "No church in the book, and the motives are not those of religion." *No church in Nicholas Nickleby!!!* No, indeed. Mr. Squeers boasted that he was "the right shop for morals," but he did not profess theology; and the Brothers Cheeryble may reasonably be suspected of a tendency to Undenominational Religion.

Another point in Gladstone's character, which Mr. Morley made abundantly clear, is that he was essentially, and one might almost say passionately, practical. He had, like most of us, two sides to his nature. He was "a Highlander in the custody of a Lowlander." The Highlander might brood, and dream, and imagine; might be, in Gladstone's own words, "fastidious and fanciful, fitter for a dreamer, or possibly a schoolman, than for the active purposes of public life in a busy and moving age." But the Lowlander was a man of keen calculation and careful forecasts, wholly free from the gambler's spirit, trusting nothing to luck or chance or "the casual stars," prompt to see his opportunity, inconceivably vigorous in seizing it and handling it, pertinacious to the very edge of obstinacy, and shrinking from no labour, no sacrifice, no humiliation, so long as he could carry his point.

Mr. Morley seems to have divined rightly when he referred all the permutations, inconsistencies, and developments of his hero's career to the same cause—his conversion to the principle of Liberty. Gladstone

told us, more than once, that he was bred, at home, at Eton, at Oxford, and in the earlier stages of his political life, to regard Liberty as a necessary evil, to be jealously watched and carefully circumscribed. He came to regard it as the greatest good of human life. This momentous conversion first occurred in connexion with commerce, when the young Minister, suddenly forced by the demands of his office to tackle quite unfamiliar subjects connected with the material well-being of the nation, found himself driven rapidly and irresistibly to the conclusion, that the less the State interfered with the operation of natural and economic law, the better for all concerned. The lesson, first learned in the school of commerce, soon extended its operations to other spheres. By degrees, the statesman who had first become known to the world as the champion of the closest union between the State and the Church, came to see that the Church's main danger lay, not in her legal severance from the State, but in the surrender of her spiritual freedom for the sake of the material boons which the State could give. This was a marked conversion to the principle of Liberty in the sphere of religion. And yet again Mr. Morley traced Gladstone's transition from the attitude of his early manhood, when he sat as a duke's nominee for a rotten borough, through the conservatism of his middle age, when he still was an advocate of the system which brought him into Parliament, to the momentous enlargements of the suffrage for which he was twice responsible ; and in all this great transition

he showed the working of the principle of Liberty. "Are they not our own flesh and blood?" Gladstone indignantly asked, with reference to the artisans of England in 1866. Such a question would not have shaped itself on the lips of the candidate for Newark in 1832.

We turn now from portraiture to history. It is interesting to know that Queen Victoria admonished Mr. Morley that his subject "should not be handled in the narrow way of party." He most loyally obeyed this admonition; and indeed he would have found considerable difficulty in acting otherwise, for he had to tell the story of a life which embodied in turn nearly every phase of political thinking. It was clearly impossible to "handle in the narrow way of party" the career of a politician who was a Tory, a Liberal-Conservative, and a Liberal; the champion of Church and State, and the destroyer of the Irish Establishment; the defender of the Crimean War and the prime opponent of Lord Beaconsfield's anti-Russian policy; the denouncer of Home Rule as "the disintegration of the great capital institutions of this country," and the author of the Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893.

In spite of the enormous and unexplored resources which Mr. Morley had at his command, he did not, I think, make any material addition to our knowledge of that long tract of time which ended with Gladstone's first retirement in 1874. Events as well as persons seemed to emerge from Mr. Morley's canvas in very much the same forms and colours as they had worn in previous narratives of the time, though, of course,

with infinitely greater wealth of detail. We saw the strong, natural, unprecocious boy in his orderly and opulent home; the steady and dutiful school-life at Eton; the development and discipline of mental powers at Oxford; the signal gift of public speaking; the desire for the clerical calling; and the unexpected summons to a parliamentary career. We learned again, that his transition from the Evangelicalism of his youth to the Sacramentalism of his maturer age was no result of influences brought to bear at Oxford, but grew out of independent study and reflection at a later stage. We were told of his early and conspicuous success in Parliament; his absorbing interest in the concerns of the Church and religion; his unwilling apprenticeship to finance and commerce; his decisive conversion to the doctrine of Free Exchanges, and his resulting ejection from the Borough which the Protectionist Duke regarded as "his own."

Then come the eighteen years of happy, though often arduous, connexion with the University of Oxford, and all the ecclesiastical and educational controversies which mingled so inharmoniously with tariffs and budgets; financial fame growing year by year, and yet the dark shadow of electoral defeat drawing ever closer. Then the crisis of 1865; the "unmuzzled" orator shaking off the dust of Oxford from his feet, and flinging himself on the economic sympathies of Lancashire. Then Lord Palmerston's death, removing the "peg driven through Delos"; Lord Russell's short and ineffectual premiership, the abortive Reform Bill of 1866,

and Gladstone's sudden elevation to the position of a popular hero. The end of 1868 saw him at length Prime Minister, and then comes the familiar narrative of his first Administration: great tasks successfully accomplished, and great popularity steadily waning, till at last we behold the "range of exhausted volcanoes, with not a flame flickering on a single pallid crest."

In January 1874, Gladstone, finding that the Ministry no longer possessed authority or dignity, made his long-considered appeal to the nation. A financier to the backbone, "thrifty and penurious," as he himself said, "by nature," he could conceive no stronger bait than a great remission of taxation. "Return me to power again," he cried, "and I will abolish the income-tax." To the great Middle Class no doubt it was an alluring prospect; but the Democracy does not pay income-tax, and Gladstone's appeal fell flat. The General Election gave a Tory majority. Gladstone, after a year of partial retirement, resigned the Liberal leadership at the beginning of 1875, and assumed, so far as it was possible for an ex-Premier to do so, the position and irresponsibility of a private member. The causes of his resignation were not far to seek. He "deeply desired an interval between Parliament and the grave." He had been disappointed by the result of his appeal to the country. He had found the Liberal party self-willed and rebellious. He regarded his own return for Greenwich, "after Boord the distiller, as more like a defeat than a victory." He thought it "better to be defeated

outright, than to be pitched in like me at Greenwich." With all these causes of dissatisfaction at work in a singularly sensitive and irritable organization, it is quite conceivable that Gladstone's retirement from leadership might have been final. Had the Tory Government pursued a steady-going course, only oscillating, as Lord Beaconsfield wrote in unregenerate days, between "humbug and humdrum"; had the national finances been handled in a sober and business-like way; and had foreign affairs been tranquil; it is possible that Gladstone would have contented himself with theological work and literary recreation, have allowed the Administration to go on, virtually unchallenged, till the end of the Parliament, and then have disappeared into that domestic and religious privacy which he always considered the appropriate scene for the close of life. But none of these things happened. The Government, intoxicated by the Oriental dreams which Lord Beaconsfield was now trying to realize, plunged into strange courses all over the globe; the finances of the country had to be so manipulated as to meet the requirements of this adventurous policy; and above all, the age-long conflict between Islam and Christianity in the East of Europe broke out in a form which stirred humanitarian sympathy as profoundly as religious zeal. This was too much for Gladstone's self-effacing resolve. He rushed from his "Temple of Peace" at Hawarden, forgot alike the Troad and the Vatican, and flung himself into the agitation against Turkey with a zeal

which in his prime he had never equalled. He made the most impassioned speeches, often in the open air ; he published pamphlets which rushed into incredible circulations ; he poured letter after letter into the newspapers ; he darkened the sky with controversial postcards. He resumed his constant attendance in the House of Commons, and lavishly expended his unequalled resources of eloquence, argumentation, and inconvenient enquiry, in driving home his great indictment against the Turkish Empire and Lord Beaconsfield. Lord Hartington, who, since Gladstone's retirement, had been leading the Liberal Party in the House of Commons, soon found himself pushed aside from his position of titular command. Though there was a section of the Whigs who doggedly supported Turkey, it soon became evident that, both in the House and in the country, the fervour, the faith, the militant and victorious element in the Liberal Party, were sworn to Gladstone's standard. And now a decisive moment was at hand. In January 1879 it was resolved by the Liberal committee of Midlothian, "amid infinite resolution, enthusiasm, and solid sense of responsibility, that Mr. Gladstone should be invited to contest the metropolitan county of Scotland." He might have a safe seat in the city of Edinburgh, or at Leeds ; but he deliberately, and after much circumspection, chose a field of action where the fighting would be severe, and the public interest proportionately keen. "If this election goes on," he wrote, "it will gather into itself a great deal

of force and heat, and will be very prominent." This prediction was verified to the letter. The contest in Midlothian, and especially the two great oratorical campaigns of November 1879 and March 1880, "gathered into itself a great," indeed an unprecedented, "deal of force and heat"; and it practically re-established its hero in his place as leader of the Liberal Party. No one saw this more clearly than Lord Hartington, and he contemplated resigning the leadership of the Opposition in the House of Commons, but was withheld by the assurance that such resignation would seriously impair the unity of the Party.

The Parliament elected in February 1874 was dissolved in March 1880. Gladstone was returned for Midlothian; with a Liberal majority of 100 at his back, without counting the Irish. Lord Beaconsfield saw that he was beaten, and resigned without meeting the new Parliament. The Queen sent for Lord Hartington, as Liberal leader in the House of Commons, and pressed him to form an Administration. It was Gladstone's opinion that she should have sent first for Lord Granville. "It was to him that I resigned my trust." But the question of selection had no practical importance. Neither Lord Hartington nor Lord Granville could have formed an Administration with Gladstone as the Candid Friend on a back bench. This they knew, and they concurred in telling the Queen the unpalatable truth. But would Gladstone join an Administration in any other capacity than that of Prime Minister? This

was a question so preposterous, that Lord Hartington apologized for putting it, on the ground that the Queen had commanded him to do so. The answer was a foregone conclusion, and Lord Hartington declined an impossible task. The fact that he so decided was not due to any reluctance on his part to become Prime Minister, or to any difficulty in finding colleagues. One declamatory politician, who had ostentatiously severed himself from Gladstone when it looked as if his former chief had finally fallen from power to postcards, and who proclaimed that the Midlothian Campaign had cost the Liberal Party fifty seats, strongly urged Lord Hartington to make the great attempt, and generously promised his assistance. But wiser counsels prevailed, and on the 23rd of April 1880 Gladstone kissed hands as Prime Minister for the second time.

Looking back on the record of his life, we see that this was the culminating point of his great career. He was now seventy years old, and the eighteen years which were still reserved to him could add little to his monumental fame. Mr. Morley, whose historical candour is as notable as his biographical zeal, did not blink the fact, that the Administration of 1880 was ill-starred. It began badly by delaying to recall Sir Bartle Frere from the scene of his misdeeds. It failed to vindicate the principle of religious liberty in the case of Bradlaugh. It blundered incredibly in Egypt. It violated the first principles of liberty in Ireland, by legalizing imprisonment without trial; and yet, by

a curious Nemesis, it so completely lost the power of effective government, that outrage, conspiracy, and agrarian murder went on conquering and to conquer. In vain it varied slaps with sops; introduced a Compensation Bill, and carried a Land Act. In vain Gladstone proclaimed, with the most impassioned eloquence, "that the steps of crime dogged the steps of the Land League." In vain Forster talked impressively of "village ruffians." In vain the Prime Minister announced, amid the plaudits of Guildhall, that he had clapped Parnell into prison. Neither slaps nor sops produced the desired results; and, by the beginning of May 1882, the Government found it convenient to release its wholly unrepentant prisoners, receiving in return a promise that Parnell would "co-operate in Liberal legislation." On the 6th of May, the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, more startling, but not a whit more culpable than the forty which had preceded it, threw this strangely unstable Government into a hot fit of coercion. The new Crimes Act, which Sir William Harcourt drove manfully through the House of Commons, was happily described as "Martial Law in a Wig." But it had the one merit which coercion can claim, and which the Government's last attempt had lacked—it was effective. Courageously administered by Lord Spencer and Sir George Trevelyan, in a season of unexampled peril and anxiety, it crushed agrarian crime, and brought to the gallows the murderers of Phoenix Park. Ireland became outwardly tranquil, and easy-going Liberals believed

that they would hear no more of "the Irish difficulty." They little guessed the strange designs which were already beginning to shape themselves in the mind of their venerable chief. The idea that Gladstone was silently becoming a Home Ruler would have seemed as far remote from actuality, as the idea that he was becoming a Protectionist or a Quaker.

In this welcome lull of Irish disturbance, the Government took in hand the fulfilment of their engagement to extend the Parliamentary suffrage to the Agricultural Labourer. But, so untoward were the stars, that even this great and salutary change could only be secured by a humiliating surrender to the hereditary enemies of popular freedom. When the Bill reached the House of Lords, the Lords declined to pass it, unless, before passing it, they saw the scheme of Redistribution which was to follow it. Every Liberal, from the Prime Minister downwards, thundered against this monstrous claim of the hereditary legislators. Under bidding from above, we made the welkin ring with protests that we never, never would be slaves; that Parliament should be dissolved; that the House of Lords should be annihilated; that the Peerage should be swamped by new creations—that anything and everything the most terrific should happen before we let the Lords see our Seats Bill. All the summer and autumn of 1884 the battle raged; but the Lords sat tight. They knew that our Egyptian policy was so unpopular that the Government dared not dissolve until the new

constituency was created ; and for our other threats they did not care a rap. Suddenly, on the 18th of November, Gladstone capitulated. The peers got their way, and the Liberal Party had to eat its big words with the best grace it could muster. Strange as it may seem, Gladstone to the end of his life regarded this humiliation as a triumph. But from that day the Lords took out a new lease of power. They had learnt that their "strength was to sit still."

And now we are approaching that part of Mr. Morley's narrative which is by far the most interesting and actual. For from 1886 he was at the centre of Liberal policy ; and it is not unfair to surmise, that the concluding portion of his book is a history of Home Rule, as he himself saw it and handled it ; compiled while the recollection was still quite fresh, and woven with admirable skill into the fabric of his continuous narrative.

As the popularity of the Liberal Government declined, the courage of the Opposition rose, and insubordination began to show itself in the Liberal Party. Tories joined with Irish and Radicals in censuring the aberrations of the Egyptian policy, and in denouncing some of the incidents of Lord Spencer's Irish administration. It was obvious that there was a working alliance between the Tories and the Irish, having for its object the displacement of the Government ; and that some Radical politicians were consenting to the plan. On the 8th of June 1885, the Government were defeated on a detail in the Budget, and sought refuge from their difficulties in flight.

Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister, and the bond which had held the Liberal Party in some decent semblance of cohesion was suddenly relaxed. The first incident which marked the disruption was a banquet given to Lord Spencer. It was designed by the Whigs and Moderate Liberals as a formal tribute to the courage and firmness which he had displayed in Ireland, and as a protest against Tory criticisms of his rule. "We are giving Spencer a dinner for coercing the Irish," was the current formula of the moment; and from that dinner the Radical leaders ostentatiously absented themselves. But neither the diners nor the absentees ever contemplated the possibility that, within six months, the hero of the evening would be recommending a separate Parliament for Ireland, and proclaiming a "Union of Hearts" with the people whom he had so vigorously ruled. And so we drew on towards the General Election, which, by special arrangement between the two parties, had been fixed for November 1885. And now every week brought its incidents and its surprises; and even the humblest politician had his share in "the joy of eventful living."

Towards the end of the summer, Gladstone, now out of office and presumably looking to a return, spoke to me with serious concern about the growth of Socialistic ideas in the Liberal Party. Those ideas were just then quickened into vigorous life by Mr. Chamberlain's admirable manifestoes. In the course of our conversation, Gladstone declared himself vehemently hostile to Socialism in any sense of

the word. When I asked whether by "Socialism" he meant the State doing for the individual what he ought to do for himself, or the State taking private property for national purposes, he replied, with indescribable emphasis: "I mean both; but I reserve my worst Billingsgate for the *latter*." In the autumn, this enquiry was resumed. On the 2nd of October I went to Hawarden for a four days' visit, and during some part of the time I was alone with Gladstone. I then learned, to my amazement, that he considered Lord Granville the most authoritative and influential person in the Liberal Party, and the one whose obvious duty it would be, as soon as the General Election was over, to call the Liberal leaders together for a consultation on results and prospects. Of Mr. Chamberlain's popularity, capacity, and ascendancy over the Radical part of the party, he seemed to have no conception. I confessed myself an adherent of the "Unauthorized Programme," and Mr. Gladstone evidently believed me to be—what I was not—in Mr. Chamberlain's confidence. "What does Chamberlain mean?" he asked. I replied that, so far as I knew, Chamberlain did not mean to dethrone my host from the Liberal leadership, and probably felt that he could not do so, if he wished; but that I thought he most certainly meant to prevent Lord Hartington from succeeding to the leadership when Mr. Gladstone should surrender it. "But," I added, "surely the best way would be for you to ask Chamberlain to come here, and talk it out with him." My host could

not have looked more amazed if I had suggested inviting the Shah or the Sultan ; but my persuasions prevailed over his reluctance to mix political with private life, and the invitation was duly despatched and accepted. The visit proved infructuous. Socially all was pleasant, but to the merits of the "Unauthorized Programme" Gladstone remained imperious; and Mr. Chamberlain justly felt that if, on the very eve of the election, he abated the policy which had carried him to the first place in the affections of the Radicals, "the stones would immediately cry out." It has always been my opinion that, after this acute disagreement, Mr. Chamberlain could never again have worked harmoniously with his former chief; and that Home Rule was only the signal and the occasion for a severance which was inevitable.

It is unnecessary to trace in detail the history of all that happened between December 1885 and July 1886,—the balance between parties, the disclosure, inopportune and undignified, of Gladstone's intentions with regard to Home Rule, and the machinations, intrigues, and schisms which distinguished the short-lived Parliament. With regard to Gladstone's own performances in the cause of Home Rule, the true judgment was pronounced by Lord Randolph Churchill in brutal phrase—he was "an old man in a hurry." The hurry was most natural, even perhaps laudable, but it was disastrous. The more eagerly the Leader pressed forward, the more doggedly the party hung back; and, after six months' delirious excitement, the

Liberal Government made way for six years of Lord Salisbury, Mr. Balfour, and Coercion. That period of Coercion Mr. Morley treated, I think, with undue lenity. An examination of Mr. Balfour's dealings with John Mandeville would not have been out of place.

In August 1886, Gladstone said to me with reference to the General Election just concluded: "Well, this has been a great disappointment." On my mildly suggesting that the result was pretty much what we might have expected, he replied with extreme vivacity: "Not at all what we might have expected. I was assured by the experts that we should sweep the country." If only we knew for certain who those "experts" were, their heads ought, in a figurative sense, to be impaled on the top of Temple Bar.

Apart from all questions of hurry and suddenness, and imperfect preparation for a bewildering transition, Gladstone made a grave error in his reliance on Parnell. He felt the power, the aptitude, and the strong volition of his new ally; but he ignored, till it was too late, some vital faults of character. That Parnell hated England, no one, I suppose, denied; but those precious "experts," whom we have already quoted, forgot that his ignorance of England was as profound as his hatred. In calculating electoral results in Ireland he was, till his downfall, an unfailing guide; but he knew little of English life and English character—nothing of that profound dislike of the Irish element which obtains in English towns where there is an Irish colony. The dislike may be unkind, unjust,

unchivalrous; and some of us have done our best to allay it. But in 1886 and 1892 it detracted considerably from the electoral value of the Irish Alliance. In the light of subsequent events, it is half ludicrous and half pathetic to think of Parnell's visit to Hawarden in 1889; his amicable tea-drinkings with the venerable antagonist who had imprisoned him without trial; and the serene confidence in Gladstonian circles that the Irish chief had emerged from his Bastille in a penitent and chastened frame, like a naughty child who has been locked up in a dark cupboard.

But the crowning miscalculation of this period, so fruitful in strange blunders, was that which Gladstone proclaimed in the *Nineteenth Century* for September 1891. Here this close observer of political meteorology, this unrivalled master of figures and calculations, after fully taking into account the losses caused by Parnell's downfall and the resulting schism in the Irish Party, arrived at the encouraging result, that the next General Election could not give him less than a majority of 100. With a touching faith in his own predictions, he urged the Unionists to abandon a fight which was not only "hopeless," but "senseless." Such was the Beatific Vision which gladdened the early months of 1892. In June came the General Election; and here let Mr. Morley speak, for no one speaks so well. "The polls flowed in all day long, day after day. The illusory hopes of many months faded into night. The three-figure majority by the end of the week had vanished so completely that one

wondered how it could ever have been thought of. On July 13 his own Midlothian poll was declared, and instead of his old majority of 4000, or the 3000 on which he counted, he was only in by 690. His chagrin was undoubtedly intense, for he had put forth every atom of his strength in the campaign. But with that splendid suppression of vexation which is one of the good lessons that men learn in public life, he put a brave face on it, was perfectly cheery all through the luncheon, and afterwards took me to the music-room, where, instead of constructing a triumphant Cabinet with a majority of a hundred, he had to try to adjust an Irish policy to a Parliament with hardly a majority at all."

This is really a noble epitaph. The great man knew that his life's work was done, and that it had ended in defeat. But there was no repining, no idle lamentation, no petulant abandonment of the self-imposed but hopeless task. Well might Lord Rosebery say that he was the Bravest of the Brave.

The closing years of Gladstone's life cannot, I think, be better condensed than in these words, written in the spring of 1898, by one of his most alert and unsparing opponents. "Thinking of him now at Hawarden, one thinks of Turner's great picture—of the fighting *Téméraire*, towed to her last berth and bathed in an atmosphere beautiful and serene. And the symbolism even of that great picture is exalted in our present contemplation of a like harmony, between the memories of a hundred fights and the haven of an abiding peace. *Ave atque vale!*"

XXXVII

POLITICS AND SOCIAL LIFE

I AM invited to write on "The Relations between Social Life and Politics in England," and the invitation is accompanied by a hint that, in dealing with this theme, it is not necessary to "commence with the Deluge." Well, perhaps not actually with the Deluge, but it is necessary to "commence" a good way back; for, until a period well within living memory, the relations between social life and politics in England were still governed by traditions inherited from the days of the Stuarts. It was the long strife between the Stuarts and the Parliament which first divided English society into the Court Party and the Country Party. The Court Party maintained

"The right divine of kings to govern wrong."

The Country Party stood for the right of the common people to enjoy a reasonable measure of civil and religious freedom.

The Revolution of 1688 did not disturb the line of cleavage. The friends of freedom had, for the moment, got the upper hand: the defenders of

arbitrary power lay low, but in their abasement they were steadily watching for, and trying to promote, a readjustment of positions. Through the reigns of Anne and George I., and far on into the reign of George II., the adherents of the Stuart cause believed in the restoration of the Stuarts as well within the range of practical politics. The existence of this belief, and the various machinations to which it necessarily gave rise, virtually determined the cleavage of society. Everyone was either a secret supporter of arbitrary power and popish religion, or else a friend to constitutional freedom and the Protestant succession. Whereas, under the Jameses and the Charleses, people had been Royalists or Parliamentarians, Roundheads or Cavaliers, under George I. and George II. they were Jacobites or Hanoverians. The civil life of England was practically divided into two camps. In the one, you had the champions of Protestantism, constitutional government, and the established order, strongly entrenched, flaunting their colours, and openly challenging all the world. In the other, you had the secret soldiery of the exiled cause; precluded, by the necessities of the case, from making open demonstration, but incessantly busied, out of sight, with plots and stratagems and manœuvres for the overthrow of the Hanoverians and the restoration of the Stuarts. Everyone who, in the social sense, was anyone, must belong to one party or the other; and there were neither relations nor communications between the two. Men lived as men would naturally

live, whose traditions held the recent memory of one civil war, and who confidently expected to see another.

It is a difficult and interesting study to trace the decline and fall of the Jacobite faith. As a mere idea—what Matthew Arnold called “a lost cause, an impossible loyalty”—it survived the death of Charles Edward in 1788; scarcely owned itself defeated by the death of his Cardinal-brother in 1807, and even lingers to this hour in antiquarian dreams. But, as a practical force in English politics, Jacobitism came to an end in 1746. Culloden was the death of it. From that time, a new line of cleavage began to divide English politics, and, as a consequence, English society. As long as Jacobitism was active, and actually threatening the dynasty and the Constitution, the adherents of the Hanoverian succession forgot all minor differences, and bound themselves together in a close alliance for the maintenance of the Constitution as established in 1688. Lord Beaconsfield, though he always loved a touch of picturesque travesty, did not seriously exaggerate when he said that the Government of this country from 1688 to the accession of George III. was really a “Venetian Oligarchy.” The political power, whether parliamentary or executive, was in the hands of a small group of wealthy noblemen, closely connected with one another by marriage and interest, and, however much they might differ on other points, absolutely at one in their main object—the maintenance of the Pro-

testant succession. The "great governing families of England," as they have since been called, were welded into a solid body by the fear of Jacobite conspiracy. But, after 1746, the new cleavage appeared. The great families which had aforetime been Jacobite soon became, or at any rate declared themselves to be, perfectly loyal to the established order and the *de facto* Government. Henceforward they were candidates for a share in the political administrative power which the "Venetian Oligarchy" had monopolized; and their wealth, rank, and influence made them formidable rivals. At the same time, the common peril which had held the oligarchy together being removed, the oligarchs began to fall asunder, and to rearrange themselves in fresh groups according to their respective interests and ambitions. The upper class of England, in which alone political power resided, was now united in practical acceptance of the Hanoverian dynasty; but there is one line of cleavage which, disguised by one name or another, will always reassert itself as long as men are organized in political society—I mean the line which divides the idea of Authority from the idea of Freedom.

And so, from the accession of George III., we can trace, ever more and more clearly, the separation between those two great parties in the State which, under the successive titles of King's Friends and Friends of the People, Tory and Whig, Conservative and Liberal, have subsisted to the present day. Each party was reinforced by adhesions from without.

The Tory party gradually absorbed all those families which had been Jacobite, as long as Jacobitism was possible. The Whig party drew into itself a great number of new families which had become wealthy by trade, and then had invested their wealth in land ; for only land, in those days, carried political power.

So the great battle between Whig and Tory was fairly joined ; and its varying fortunes make the history of England from 1760 to 1832. In passionate earnestness, in fanatical faith, in close comradeship between allies, in complete unscrupulousness as to methods for defeating the foe, the strife bore all the characteristics of actual warfare ; and the area of its operations covered all social as well as political life. The whole world was divided into Whigs and Tories. There were Whig families and Tory families, Whig houses and Tory houses, Whig schools and Tory schools, Whig universities and Tory universities. Thus the Duke of Norfolk and his clan were Whigs, the Duke of Beaufort and his clan were Tories ; and the cleavage ran right down, through all ranks of the peerage, into the untitled gentry. In London, Holland House was a Whig house ; Northumberland House was a Tory house. In the country, Woburn was a centre of popular movements ; Stowe, thirty miles off, the headquarters of Prerogative. Eton was supposed to cherish some sentimental affection for her former neighbours, the exiled Stuarts ; so good little Whigs were sent to Harrow. Oxford had

always borne a Jacobite character; so adolescent Whigs went to Cambridge. There were Tory poets, like Scott, and Whig poets, like Byron. There were Tory publishers, such as Murray, and Whig publishers, such as Longman; Tory actors, like Kemble, and Whig actors, like Kean. There were even Tory prayers and Whig prayers, for of the two Collects for the King, which stand at the beginning of the Communion Service, the first was supposed to teach the Divine Right of kings, and the second the limitations of royal authority.

Members of the two great parties regarded one another with a genuine ill-favour and suspicion. As Tennyson's "Northern Farmer" held that "the poor in a loomp is bad," so the Whigs and Tories of old time honestly believed that their respective opponents were, as a rule, not only mistaken politicians, but bad men. The first Earl of Leicester (Thomas Coke, 1752-1842), whose life spanned the most stormy age of English politics, used to say that his grandfather took him on his knee and said: "Now, Tom, mind that, whatever you do in life, you never trust a Tory." And he used to add: "I never have, and, by G——, I never will!" When a scion of a great Whig house married a daughter of a Tory Lord Chamberlain, the head of the house exclaimed in prophetic agony: "That woman will undo all that we have been doing for two hundred years, and will make the next generation Tory." It was said that a Whig child, who from her earliest hours had never heard anything but abuse of the Tories, said to her mother:

"Mamma, are Tories born wicked? Or do they grow wicked afterwards?" And I myself knew an ancient lady, who had been brought up in the innermost circles of Whiggery, and who never entered a hackney cab until she had ascertained from the driver that he was not a Tory.

Meanwhile the Tories were by no means backward in reciprocating these amenities, and little Tories were trained to believe that Whiggery meant treason to kings, and impiety to God, and that all the frequenters of Whig houses were in their secret hearts atheists and revolutionaries. The high-water mark of this polemical intemperance was reached when the Tory ladies of society, infuriated by Queen Victoria's Whiggish proclivities, hissed their young sovereign at Ascot Races.

On the relations between social life and politics in England during the earlier years of Queen Victoria's reign, there was no better authority than Lord Beaconsfield, who, as the dazzling and inscrutable Benjamin Disraeli, was just then beginning his public career. In *Sybil* he describes, with inimitable humour, the social machinations by which the great ladies on each side of politics tried to circumvent their rivals and win adherents to their own cause.

"Well," said Lady St. Julians, "I think I will ask Mr. Trenchard for Wednesday. I will write him a little note. If society is not his object, what is?"

"Ay," said Egremont, "there is a great question for you and Lady Firebrace to ponder over. This is a lesson for you fine ladies, who think you can govern

the world by what you call your social influences : asking people once or twice a year to an inconvenient crowd in your house ; now haughtily smiling, and now impertinently staring, at them ; and flattering yourselves all this time that to have the occasional privilege of entering your saloons, and the periodical experience of your insolent recognition, is to be a reward for great exertions, or, if necessary, an inducement to infamous tergiversation."

This trenchant passage is supposed to refer to the political strifes of 1839 ; and from the following year, or thereabouts, a new order begins. The Queen married Prince Albert in 1840, and it was part of the Prince's policy to abate the mutual bitterness of political parties, to heal schisms, to reconcile differences, and to unite all the rank and wealth and culture of the country in the work of maintaining the Crown against the onrush of Democracy. Thus by degrees the old vigour of political strife declined ; people no longer confined their visiting to Tory houses or Whig houses : the enlarged freedom of social intercourse led to matrimonial alliances in which rival politics were blended ; and so the influence of politics in social life was sensibly diminished. At times of special stress, however, it was always ready to reassert itself. Lady Palmerston, who died in 1869, and may justly be regarded as the head of the profession of political hostesses, once gave some sage counsel to the late Lady Salisbury : "One day you will probably be a Prime Minister's wife. Be guided by my experi-

ence. When politics are acute, keep out of the way of your husband's opponents. If you meet them, something is sure to be said which will make subsequent intercourse difficult. So keep yourself to yourself till things get quiet, and then you can meet again on the old, easy terms."

What Lady Palmerston said about the seasons of special acuteness in politics remained true for thirty years after her death. It is within my personal knowledge that in 1878, when the Eastern Question was at its hottest, it was difficult for a hostess to make a party if she had Gladstone dining with her. When Home Rule was the excitement of the moment, people discarded their closest friends if they were on speaking terms with Parnell. During the South African war, the advocates and the opponents of the war could not meet without imminent risk of an explosion. At these times of special crisis, politics will reassert their old influence over Society; but, during quiet times, and in ordinary circumstances, that influence can hardly be said to exist.

In writing this, I do not forget the Primrose League. That remarkable institution, designed by the genius of Lord Randolph Churchill to promote the interests of the Tory party by social influences, is an electioneering agency of great value: but it scarcely affects Society. It operates among the Lower Middle classes, whom it influences by bringing them into delighted contact with the Tory aristocracy; but it does not touch the general life of Society, for

Society possesses by nature the boons which the League dispenses to those who have them not but earnestly desire them. The same remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the "Liberal Social Council," which endeavours to do for the Liberal party what the Primrose League has done for the Tories.

Thinking of Society as it exists at this present moment, I should say that it is wholly uninfluenced by politics. I do not know that there is a single house to which a man would be admitted, or from which he would be excluded, on account of his political opinions. In brief, the amalgamation of Liberals and Conservatives for social purposes is complete. To what is that amalgamation due? Partly, no doubt, to indifferentism. In days gone by, political opinions were like religious beliefs; their adherents held them with profound conviction, thought any labour and any sacrifice well bestowed in promoting them, and regarded the professors of opposite tenets with ill-concealed aversion. Sydney Smith boasted that he had never been "stricken by the palsy of candour," and eager politicians on both sides were disposed to rate their opponents as knaves or fools. Under these circumstances, they naturally did not seek one another's society. When they were forced into one another's company by the exigencies of life, they were civil because they were gentlemen; but the civility was hollow and artificial. What politicians really enjoyed was a society where they could say what they thought of the other side with the out-

spoken vigour which distinguished the journals of Thomas Creevey and John Wilson Croker.

Nowadays this temper has almost entirely disappeared. As I said just now, it reasserts itself at times of special strain, when the long-descended principles of Authority and Freedom are brought sharply into conflict. But these crises only arise once in ten years, if so often ; and, in the intervening decades politicians contrive to live together in amity and peace.

Of course, the controversy between parties—between the Ins and the Outs—goes on simmering all the time. All politicians desire office, patronage, profit, power, social consideration, a place in the public eye ; and what they desire for themselves, their wives and families, friends and hangers-on, desire for them ; so, just at the time of a General Election, when the enjoyment of these boons for the next five years or so is hanging on the issue of the contest, social relations between rival politicians become a little strained. But between one General Election and another, a complete harmony prevails. No one, on either side, believes very passionately in the gospel which he preaches. In a cool and reasoned way, the politician thinks his party and its policy, on the whole, the best ; but there is nothing passionate in his conviction, nothing enthusiastic in his language : he does not seriously doubt that his opponent is quite as honest a thinker, quite as good a citizen, as himself ; he does not impute base motives, or imagine moral obliquities. In fine, the relations between the two political parties are as

harmonious as those between two sides in an athletic contest, when they meet again in social life after the match is lost and won.

It is obvious that this spirit of indifferentism in politics must diminish, if it does not destroy, the influence of politics on social life. When people regarded their opponents as "bold, bad men," they naturally did not ask them to dinner. Now, when no one ever thinks it worth while to condemn anyone else, there is no political hindrance to social hospitality. And hospitality is not, and never can be, the last word. Where people of all ages meet, day after day and night after night, in the same houses, and in the same amusements, acquaintance is bound to deepen into something more intimate. No Tory father would dream, nowadays, of declining the advances of a Liberal youth who desired to marry his daughter: and the Liberal father, as becomes his traditions, would be even more wide-minded. So the force of relationship comes in to reinforce the action of indifferentism: and people can dine in the most affectionate intimacy with their relations-in-law, though they may be going down to the House of Lords or the House of Commons directly after dinner to vote in opposite lobbies.

Politicians who are old enough to remember the days when political strife was earnest and even brutal are inclined to lament the softer conditions of modern controversy. They say—and certainly there is some truth in it—that men who hospitably mix with one another in social life are disarmed when they come to

attack one another in public, and that therefore the fight, which ought to be fought out with all possible determination, loses in vigour, earnestness, and interest. A remarkable instance of this disarming process has been supplied in recent years by the performances of a social clique which for some time played a conspicuous part in London. Some five and twenty years ago, society became aware that a new dynasty—for it was more than a family—had made its appearance in London. The Neuchatels—we will borrow a name from Lord Beaconsfield—had much to recommend them. The parents had great wealth and hospitable dispositions. Their daughters had some beauty, a great deal of smartness, several accomplishments, unbounded vivacity, and a social ambition which could not be described as moderate. The whole family were unusual people. They were entirely outside the customary rut. They had no conventional prejudices, and did not feel themselves restrained by any social discipline. They said, did, and wore, exactly what they pleased. They went where they chose, and behaved as they chose. They resembled a gang of social gypsies, who had pitched their camp in the very heart of Vanity Fair. It was generally imagined that they had foreign blood in their veins; but this was never ascertained. This only was certain—that they enjoyed their lives thoroughly; that they were widely, though not universally, popular; and that they made a more than ephemeral impression on the “too, too solid flesh” of London society.

The Neuchatels come into this chapter only because they succeeded, as no one else had ever succeeded, in mixing politicians of all schools in a frank *camaraderie* with soldiers and actors and authors and artists and racing men. The whole business resembled a scene from *Trilby*; and grave politicians, who had dined and drunk and chaffed and romped together in the frank fellowship of "Liberty Hall," could not easily pump up rhetorical indignation when they faced one another across the House of Commons, or criticized one another on the platform. Observers, who are not acquainted with the inner working of English politics, are sometimes perplexed by the honeyed amenity with which Mr. Balfour opposes Mr. Asquith, or Mr. Haldane replies to Mr. Wyndham. The secret is to be found in the social influence of the Neuchatels and others like them.

But the most healing influence which has been brought to bear on what was once the angry life of politics is the influence of his Majesty King Edward VII. Placed by his position above party, gracious and friendly by nature, abhorring strife and contention, and delighting in a society where everyone is cheerful and makes the best of life, the King has done as much to promote mutual good-will among people separated by political disagreements as he has done on the wider stage of international relations. Politics no longer influence Society, because Society is dominated by a personality above politics.

XXXVIII

RITUALISM AND DISESTABLISHMENT

THE title of an article should be short, and in the words at the head of this chapter I have endeavoured to condense the task which the Editor of the *Albany Review* set me. That task was to examine the *Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline* (1906) and then to estimate its bearing on the question of disestablishing the English Church. This, briefly stated, amounts to what I have called "Ritualism and Disestablishment."

Whatever else may be said or thought about the Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline, this at any rate is certain—that its authors and promoters did not intend it to help the cause of Disestablishment. It was devised in the first instance to deliver a Gallio-like Minister from a parliamentary embarrassment, and it was enthusiastically adopted by the persecuting party in the Church, in the hope that it might enable them to destroy the outward and visible manifestations of a faith which they detest. When, in 1874, Archbishop Tait introduced his Public Worship Regulation Bill, with infinite palaver about paternal authority and proved abuses and peaceful reforms, Disraeli brushed

aside all the flummery and exposed the naked truth—"This is a Bill to put down Ritualism." For "Bill" read "Commission," and you have the exact account of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline. It should be observed that no attempt was made to preserve even a semblance of impartiality in the selection of the Commissioners. The wretched Ritualists, whose alleged misdeeds were to be examined, and, if possible, punished, had not a single friend among the inquisitors appointed to harry them. The Commission was packed with Low Churchmen and Broad Churchmen (to use the traditional nicknames), and among these were included, in a minority so small that it could do no harm, three moderately High Churchmen. Ritualist, or friend of Ritualism, there was none. This studied and scandalous onesidedness, contrasting forcibly with the principle on which all similar Commissions in the past had been formed, has elicited an important protest from one of the judges of the High Court. Addressing a meeting of the English Church Union on the 23rd of January last, Mr. Justice Phillimore said: "The constitution of this last Commission was much less favourable to us than that of the Ritual Commission (1867), or, indeed, of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission (1881). On the Ritual Commission the English Church Union had a member, Canon Perry; in the late Commission, none. . . . Mr Talbot, in the late Commission, may well represent Mr. Hubbard, or perhaps Mr. Beresford-Hope in the Ritual Commission. Other sympathizers we had none." Even so, I think, Mr. Justice Phillimore

concedes too much. Mr. Talbot, whose judicious moderation we all respect, seems scarcely to represent the founders of St. Alban's, Holborn, and All Saints, Margaret Street. If I were a Ritualist, I should omit the "other," and say "sympathizer we had none." This being the case, it is all the more remarkable that this Commission, appointed in the hope of alarming the nation about the virulence of Ritualism, and so packed and engineered, as, if possible, to justify persecution, was driven to record its conviction "that the evidence gives no justification for any doubt that in the large majority of parishes the work of the Church is being quietly and diligently performed by clergy who are entirely loyal to the principles of the English Reformation as expressed in the Book of Common Prayer." This being so, it might be reasonably asked, "What bearing has this report on Disestablishment?" The Commissioners admit that the complaints laid before them relate only to a "small proportion of the 12,242 churches in England and Wales." If, in all the rest, "the work of the Church is being quietly and diligently performed by clergy who are entirely loyal to the principles of the English Reformation," what reason can there be for disestablishing such an orderly, diligent, and Reformation-loving Church?

Perhaps some answer to this question may be found in the Minutes of Evidence laid before the Commission. It is difficult to grasp the effect which that evidence may produce on the mind of the Man in the Street. George Eliot observed, with cruel truth, that "the depths

of middle-aged gentlemen's ignorance will never be known, for want of public examinations in this branch." A public examination in which the subject-matter should be the Church, its nature, its work, and its ways, would disclose some serious gaps in the knowledge of even educated men. Mr. John Morley, unexpectedly taking a hand at "No Popery," justified his plea for the Education Bill by dark allusions to mysteries of evil which the Report of the Commission would disclose; and, when so experienced a publicist is scared, one can picture the perturbation of the Man in the Street, whose ignorance of the Church and the Prayer-book is only equalled by his ignorance of the Bible. If Mr. Bottles, for so Matthew Arnold named him, reads the evidence given before the Commission, he will discover, to his infinite astonishment, that the English Church enjoins a great quantity of ceremonial, permits more, and by implication suggests more still. He will further learn that no single clergyman obeys, or can obey, every rubric with literal exactness, and that High, Low, and Broad Churchmen alike are forced to offend against strict legality. Furthermore, he will learn that a few clergymen think fit to practise ceremonies which the Prayer-book does not sanction, but which they have seen, and thought edifying, in foreign churches. He will learn also—and this will astonish him more than anything else—that Ritualistic clergymen are enthusiastically and doggedly supported by their congregations, and that the laity are the people who demand increased ceremonial. Finally, he will

notice—and, if he be a persecutor, he will admire—the fact that the Commission lavish their ponderous rebukes on breaches of the rubric which they hold to symbolize Roman doctrines, but deal very gently with those which tend in a Zwinglian, or Calvinistic, or Unitarian direction. “The balance of the report,” says Mr. Justice Phillimore, “is wrong. The more dangerous breaches of order are in the other direction, yet not a word has been said suggesting vigorous enforcement of discipline in that direction.”

These things and others like them Mr. Bottles will find in the evidence; and, having found them, he will strut, and fret, and talk at large about purging the Church of traitors. But I doubt if, even under this pressure, he will begin to demand Disestablishment. If I know him, he will be for some short and easy method of abolishing Ritualism, but the very last reform which he will desire is the liberation of the Church from the State. “As long as the Church is Established, we can kick the parsons; but once disestablish it, and begad! they’ll kick us.” This is the doctrine of the Man in the Street, and no one can deny that it has a basis of truth. What then is the true bearing of the Report on Disestablishment? The terms of the Report itself certainly do not favour any severance of the bond which binds the Church to the State. The evidence, as I have just said, may astonish the Man in the Street, but will not convert him to Liberationism. It only remains to consider the “Recommendations” with which the Report concludes, and these must be read in connexion with the

“two main conclusions” at which the Commissioners arrive. The first of these is stated as follows:—

The law of public worship in the Church of England is too narrow for the religious life of the present generation. It needlessly condemns much which a great section of Church people, including many of her most devoted members, value; and modern thought and feeling are characterized by a care for ceremonial, a sense of dignity in worship, and an appreciation of the continuity of the Church, which were not similarly felt at the time when the law took its present shape. In an age which has witnessed an extraordinary revival of spiritual life and activity, the Church has had to work under regulations fitted for a different condition of things, without that power of self-adjustment which is inherent in the conception of a living Church.

The second “conclusion” of the Commissioners is stated as follows:—

The machinery for discipline is broken down. The means of enforcing the law in the Ecclesiastical Courts, even in matters which touch the Church's faith and teaching, are defective and in some respects unsuitable. . . . It is important that the law should be reformed, that it should admit of reasonable elasticity, and that the means of enforcing it should be improved; but, above all, it is necessary that it should be obeyed. . . . If it should be thought well to adopt the recommendations we make in this Report, one essential condition of their successful operation will be, that obedience to the law so altered shall be required, and, if necessary, enforced, by those who bear rule in the Church of England.

In order to remedy the evils set forth in these two “conclusions,” the Commissioners make ten “Recommendations.” Most of them suggest sweeping changes in the laws which affect ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and, seeing that the Tories on the Commission were twelve, to two Liberals, it is not surprising that all these changes should be in restraint of freedom. They are aimed, in the first instance, against the freedom of the parochial clergy; but, in so far as the clergy are acting in harmony with their congregations, they also threaten the freedom of the lay-people and

their right to enjoy the type of worship which they find most helpful. The Commissioners recommend all sorts of coercive legislation—the abolition of the episcopal veto on ritual prosecutions, the “deprivation” of contumacious incumbents, the permanent exclusion from ministerial work of men who will not surrender their conscience at the bidding of a bishop ; but by far the most important of the “ Recommendations,” if only because it is the one which can be most readily carried into effect, is No. 2, which runs as follows :—

Letters of Business should be issued to the Convocations with instructions : (*a*) to consider the preparation of a new rubric regulating the ornaments (that is to say, the vesture) of the ministers of the Church, at the times of their ministrations, with a view to its enactment by Parliament ; and (*b*) to frame, with a view to their enactment by Parliament, such modifications in the existing law relating to the conduct of Divine Service and to the ornaments and fittings of churches as may tend to secure the greater elasticity which a reasonable recognition of the comprehensiveness of the Church of England and its present needs seem to demand.

Now surely, as Master Shallow says, good phrases are, and ever were, very commendable. Divested of verbiage, Recommendation No. 2 comes to this—The Convocations, which, as everyone knows, do not represent even the clergy, are to overhaul everything connected with public worship ; the terms of the creeds, the language of the prayers, the dress of the ministers, nay, even the fittings and trappings of the churches ; and then, when these clerical caucuses have done their worst, their handiwork is to be submitted, for correction or confirmation, to the judgment of the House of Commons.

The Government, whether frightened or cajoled by

the Episcopate it is hard to guess, have weakly granted the "Letters of Business"; and the Convocations, duly manipulated by apostolic wire-pullers, will soon begin to tear the Prayer-book to pieces. It is easy to forecast the changes which will be proposed; and it is possible that, in a picked and packed assemblage, the Episcopal innovators may secure a majority for their proposals. If that were all, nothing could signify less; for the decrees of Convocation have no more force than the resolutions of the Oxford Union. It is at the next stage that the bearing of these things on Disestablishment will be seen. If the recommendations of the Commissioners are carried out, the House of Commons, rightly comprising Jews, infidels and heretics, schismatics of every shape and shade, and a great mass of men simply irreligious, will be invited to undertake the work of liturgical revision. The prospect is indeed amazing. Mr. Healy will balance the respective merits of the Roman cotta and the English surplice. Mr. Rothschild will discuss the legality of the Crucifix. Mr. Lloyd-George will uphold the cope as the right garment for the Communion Service, while Mr. Masterman pleads, with tears in his voice, for the chasuble. Sir Henry Fowler, with that lucidity which is his special gift, will prove that "before the table" means behind it; and Mr. Morley, arguing for the disuse of the *Quicumque vult*, will cross swords with Mr. Haldane, who esteems it the most philosophical attempt to express the inexpressible. The language of prayer will be revised by men who believe that they die

like dogs. The Creeds will be overhauled by men who acknowledge neither God nor devil. The words and the acts with which the Lord's Supper is observed will be discussed by men who regard all sacramental usages as pestilent superstitions; and the Cross may be dethroned at the bidding of those who revile the Crucified.

This is the prospect which, if the Commissioners get their way, awaits English Churchmen; and I ask, in all seriousness, if there is any sect in Christendom, the tiniest and the weakest—the Muggletonians, the Sandemanians, or the Seventh Day Baptists—which would submit to such unholy degradation?

Just lately, some itinerant politicians, new to parliamentary life, have been stumping the country in the interests of religious persecution; and the boisterous language of 1898 and 1899 has been heard again. We are once more told that "the Mass" and "the Confessional" are to be put down by law, and that in ten years England is to be free from the last trace of the accursed thing. But this millennium can only be secured by Act of Parliament. "Foul fall the day," wrote Mr. Gladstone in 1894, "when the persons of this world shall, on whatever pretext, take into their uncommissioned hands the manipulation of the religion of our Lord and Saviour." And, if Parliament lays its hands on the Eucharistic worship of the Church, or on the Ministry of Reconciliation, the demand for Disestablishment will be heard in quarters where it is least expected, and will shake some comfortable institutions, such as the Episcopal

Bench, with unwonted tremors. If there be any Successors of the Apostles whose first care is for palaces and patronage, seats in the House of Lords, and the chief rooms at feasts, they had better take heed in time, for assuredly those cherished possessions will not long survive a second Public Worship Regulation Act.

But for the Church herself, and for those who believe in her spiritual character and claims, Dis-establishment has no terrors; while some of us have always longed for it as for a coming deliverance. We learned from a great ecclesiastic, John Wesley, that "the Establishment by Constantine was a gigantic evil," and we say with a great layman, William Gladstone—"Choose between the mess of pottage, and the birthright of the Bride of Christ."

The doctrine that the Church and the State are separate entities, bound together by a mutual alliance, but each possessing functions and prerogatives of its own, is not an invention of to-day. The spiritual independence of the Church in its own sphere was maintained by High Churchmen of the old school, such as Bishop Horsley, Archdeacon Daubeney, Oxlee, Wrangham, and Sikes of Guilborough. "The Constitution of the Church and State, according to the idea of each," was expounded by Coleridge, with his customary wealth of philosophic amplification. The Oxford Movement of 1833 was, above all else, an attempt to recall men's minds to the conception of the English Church as a spiritual society, holding its essential constitution direct from Christ, and only accidentally allied with

the secular State. This view of the Church appealed to spiritually-minded Churchmen quite outside the Oxford Movement. Whately had taught it in his *Letters of an Episcopalian*, some years before the Movement began. Dr. Hook, when Vicar of Coventry, maintained it, with characteristic force, against the Erastianism of Bishop Samuel Butler. Some of the more ardent spirits of the Oxford Movement—such as Hurrell Froude—felt the galling fetters of Establishment with special keenness; thirty years later, Dr. Pusey declared that the time had come when the Church must demand her freedom from the State. In 1877 Mr. Mackonochie, the devoted protagonist of Ritualism, drafted a Bill for Disestablishment, and that staunchest of Tories, Archdeacon Denison, joined in the demand for Liberation. In 1881, Dr. Liddon gave it as his opinion, that few, if any, Churchmen desire to see the Church disestablished or disendowed; but, having regard to the actual state of things, and the tyranny exercised by State-made courts over human consciences, he added:—

If it be a question whether it is better to be turned out of house and home, without any clothes, and even on a winter's night, or be strangled by a silken cord in a well-furnished drawing-room, what man, or Church, will have any difficulty in arriving at a decision?

It is true indeed that there are certain dignitaries, and adherents of dignitaries, whose first article of faith is, *I believe in an Established Church*, and who would cheerfully sacrifice the faith for the endowment—the altar for the gold.

But there is an increasing number of faithful

Churchmen who have learnt by the experience of recent years and by a widening acquaintance with non-established churches, the beauty of Cavour's ideal—a free church in a free state.

The Episcopal Church of the United States is one of the most vigorous, most orthodox, and best-organized parts of Christendom; and, like Bishop Hamilton forty years ago, we have found that we "had much to learn from closer contact with the faith and vigour of the American Episcopate."

As regards the Church of Australia, let us take the testimony of Dr. Thornton, Bishop of Ballarat, delivered at Dublin in 1896:—

I am here to-day, after living for twenty years within, and helping in the administration of, an unendowed and unestablished Church, and I will say that, however great the disadvantages of such a condition of affairs are to the State, I am not prepared to say that they are a disadvantage to the spiritual well-being and prosperity of the Church herself. I for one should be very sorry to take any price I can think of for the freedom of administration and government which we enjoy, the power to promote reforms, and the power of adaptation, more difficult to secure where there is a State connexion.

In 1899 the Bishop of Melbourne said:—

Let us suppose the wealth of the Church was to be taken away, and that the Archbishops and Bishops were to lose their seats in the House of Lords, the Church of England would still go on. The Church was a great spiritual corporation, governed by bishops, priests, and deacons, and it might be that, if the Church was disestablished, she might become more powerful and energetic in saving souls for Christ.

As regards the Church of Ireland, in spite of all the difficulties and dangers through which it has had to pass, chief rulers give like testimony. In October 1882, Lord Plunket, then Bishop of Meath, and afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, addressing the clergy of

his diocese at his annual Visitation, used these remarkable words in reference to the ordeal through which Ireland had passed during the previous three years :—

Before we give way to querulous murmurings, let us remember that this dark cloud has not been allowed to burst over our country until, in the providence of God, and by ways that we should never have selected for ourselves, our Church has been prepared to abide the fury of the storm. Had we been called upon to face a Land League agitation at the time when our clergy, as ministers of a State-protected Church, received their tithes from the poor, or even when they drew their tithe rent-charge from landlords, some of them in very needy circumstances, how intolerable would have been our position both as regards the obloquy and outrage we should have had to endure, and the cruel straits to which we should have been inevitably reduced ! Now, however, the very disaster which seemed to threaten our downfall has been overruled for our good.

After ten years' experience and reflection, Lord Plunket said in 1892 :—

When I count up the advantages which have followed Disestablishment ; when I think of the strength and vitality which our Church has derived from the admission of the laity to an active and responsible participation in her counsels, in the disposition of her patronage, and in the financial departments of her work ; when I observe the spirit of unity and mutual respect which has been engendered by the ordeal of our common adversity, and the increased loyalty and love which are being daily shown to their mother Church by those who have had to make some sacrifice on her behalf ; when I remember, too, the freedom from agrarian complications which our disconnexion from all questions of tithe and rent-charge has brought about, and the more favourable attitude as regards our influence upon the surrounding population which we occupy, because of our severance from any State connexion, when I remember all this counterpoise of advantage which we enjoy in our new and independent position, and when I try to hold the balance evenly and weigh the losses and the gains on the whole, I say boldly and without reserve that, in my opinion at least, the gain outweighs the loss.

In 1899 Dr. Alexander, Primate of all Ireland, spoke as follows at Templepatrick :—

I must say, in striking the balance between loss and gain there is something to be said on both sides. There are, at all

events, three or four circumstances of gain. Well, in the first place, an occasion like this reminds me that opportunities are much more frequent and more considerable for the interchange of ideas in our Churches between the bishops, clergy and laity, and our friends, also, of other denominations and schools of thought than there were in old times. I do not think there are many of our people, and I am sure not many of our friendly Presbyterian neighbours, who any longer look upon a bishop, or even that dreadful being, an archbishop, as a spiritual enemy. They know very well he has got no unusual wealth and no unusual privileges, and so they look upon him with patience and toleration at least. . . . Besides bringing together all the constituent parts of the Church, I think there is another good brought about by Disestablishment. The life of ideas makes the great part of the life of a Church, and the only way in which it can be discovered whether the ideas are really vital, whether they have real life in them or not, is to show how they work, and whether they can last when clothed in totally different surroundings and investiture of circumstances; and so is it with many of their Church's ideas. They all feel that they have an old Church, and they feel that that Church is able to act upon new lines.

The third thing about Disestablishment to which I would like to refer is, that our present position gives our people scope for liberality, and I must say, after making all allowances, the liberality of Irish Churchmen has, on the whole, been very conspicuous. It is a very simple fact, about which there is no manner of doubt, that five millions of money have been raised in our parishes since the time of the Disestablishment in 1869, and when you take into account the building of churches, the five millions become six millions. That, I think, speaks well for liberality.

In conclusion, the Archbishop counted a fourth advantage of Disestablishment, certainly not less important than the former three.

And yet another privilege which the Disestablished Church enjoys, is that it is free to legislate.

These last words touch the heart of the present controversy. A disestablished Church can exercise the elementary rights of spiritual self-government, can formulate its own faith, and shape its own worship. It is free from Acts of Uniformity and Royal Commissions and State-made bishops and

Parliamentary wire-pullers. It can discharge its Divine commission to the souls of men without let or hindrance from the powers which rule an unconverted world. So, if the issue of the present controversy is the Disestablishment of the English Church, what was intended to be a fresh yoke of bondage will prove to have been an instrument of emancipation. At length we shall be free from the interference of outsiders, and the worship of the Jumping Cat, and the appeal to the Man in the Street, and all the degrading incidents in which Establishment has involved us.

All but sixty years ago an English clergyman, of high standing and wide influence, renounced, as was said, "the Church which was his living and the pulpit which was his throne," because he saw that the Church's alliance with the State involved urgent and manifold danger to spiritual religion. Surveying the prospects of the contest which he believed to be impending, he wrote some memorable and exhilarating words:—

Should we in this cause meet with some rude assaults, the cause is worth the conflict. The humble tomb at Thermopylæ speaks more to the generous traveller than the sky-pointing Pyramids. For, when the three hundred Spartans stood on the narrow causeway between Mount Œta and the sea, to guard the liberties of their country against an innumerable host of invaders, they did that which will live in the hearts of brave men while the world lasts. And the liberties of Christ's Churches are more precious than the civil liberties of Greece. Let each minister, and each Christian, who knows that the principles of the union [between Church and State] are corrupt and dishonourable to Christ, resolve that they will terminate the bondage of the Anglican Churches by destroying it; and, with the aid of God, they will at last succeed.¹

¹ Essay on the *Union of Church and State*. By Baptist Wriothlesley Noel, M.A. 1848.

XXXIX

"IN LIVING TOUCH WITH THE NATION"

I TAKE these words from the allocution recently addressed by the Bishop of Carlisle to his Diocesan Conference.¹ One would not readily guess the subject to which the Bishop applied them.

In my time at Oxford there was an awful form of religious examination, called by undergraduates "Contexts." Several fragments of Holy Writ were placed before us, and we were bidden to supply by memory the context in which each occurred. The result, though perhaps plausible, was seldom exact. [Text as proposed by examiner]: "*My punishment is greater than I can bear.*" [Context as supplied by undergraduate]: "This was said by Agag when he was hewn in pieces."

It is my firm belief that a student of English history who was called to supply the context of the Bishop's text—"In living touch with the nation"—would be as completely baffled as the undergraduate, and perhaps with better excuse.

But here are text and context in their proper

¹ September 1907.

juxtaposition: "Up to the time of the Tractarian Movement, whatever might have been the faults and weaknesses of the English Church—and they were many—it was at least in living touch with the nation."

The Tractarian Movement dates, as we all know, from July 14, 1833, and to affirm that, up to that time, the English Church "was in living touch with the nation," and has since ceased to be so, is a flight of paradox on which Mr. Chesterton would scarcely have ventured, but which might have supplied Sir W. S. Gilbert with the *motif* for one of his "Bab Ballads."

It was said of old time that Coleridge's metaphysics were "only his fun." I am told by those who have the honour of knowing the Bishop of Carlisle that he likes his joke; and I cannot help suspecting that, when he dropped this paradoxical pebble into the quiet waters of a Diocesan Conference, he was animated by a boy-like desire to see it start the eddying circles of controversy, and so to impart some liveliness to proceedings which are usually staid, even to the verge of dulness. The published reports of the Conference do not tell us whether this episcopal pleasantry succeeded in its object. One knows the sort of people who frequent Diocesan Conferences, and they are not, as a rule, "gay gleg at the uptak." Perhaps they were deaf; perhaps they were thinking about luncheon; perhaps they had got up early, had travelled a long way, and followed the example of Eutychus; perhaps a sacred awe made them mute. What I cannot believe is that any company of English

Churchmen, even moderately well acquainted with the history of Church and State, took the Bishop seriously when he said that up to 1833 "the English Church was in living touch with the nation." As I write, the suspicion grows upon me that the Conference felt that its leg was being pulled, and took the episcopal joke as jokes ought always to be taken.

The incident has set me, as Burke would say, on thinking; and the Bishop's sly fun gains enormously when it is contrasted with the dry testimony of historians and chroniclers. The limits of space forbid us to go back into the history of the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries. It must suffice for my present purpose to note the "living touch with the nation" which the English Church enjoyed during the forty years immediately preceding the Tractarian Movement. In 1794 Sydney Smith became curate-in-charge of a village on Salisbury Plain. He found the Church empty, and the villagers "aliment for Newgate, food for the halter—a ragged, wretched, savage, stubborn race." Five years later he wrote: "In England (except among ladies in the middle rank of life) there is no religion at all. The clergy of England have no more influence on the people at large than the cheesemongers of England." William Wilberforce, visiting Brigg in 1796, found "no service on Sunday morning, and all the people lounging about the streets." He found Stamford, in 1798, "a sad, careless place, the butchers' shops open on Sunday. At church miserable work. A shopkeeper said that none of the clergy were active, or went

among the poor." When Archdeacon Daubeney became Vicar of North Bradley, just before the close of the century, he "found the people so barbarous that they would pull down the walls of the church and vicarage, then rebuilding, and cut and destroy the trees." In 1800 Bishop Horsley said: "For the last thirty years we have seen but little correspondence between the lives of men and their professions; a general indifference about the doctrines of Christianity, a general neglect of its duties." In 1801 Beilby Porteus, Bishop of London, wrote that "the state of the kingdom, political, moral, and religious, was so unfavourable as to excite the most serious alarm in every mind of reflection." In 1805 Edward Stanley, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, became Rector of Alderley, and found that "the clerk used to go to the churchyard stile to see whether there were any more coming to church, for there were seldom enough to make a congregation. The former Rector used to boast that he had never set foot in a sick person's cottage." And yet, all this while, according to Bishop Diggle, "the Church was in living touch with the nation."

It would be nearer the mark to say that the Church was in living touch with the governing classes. She had forgotten her mission to the poor, and had become the bond-slave of privilege and wealth. So doggedly and so uniformly were the clergy opposed to all schemes of political or social amelioration, that the country parson was spoken of as "the Black Recruiting Sergeant" of the army of despotism. Within the

recollection of countrymen who repeated it to me, the most popular cry in the villages was "More pigs and less parsons." In 1820 an attack on social abuses, called "The Black Book," was published, and it described the "Church of England priest" as "a furious political demon, rapacious, insolent, luxurious, having no fear of God before his eyes." This instance of "living touch with the nation" may be specially recommended to our Bishop's attention.

Meanwhile the Bishops in the House of Lords, where, of all places, they came most closely into "living touch with the nation," incurred an amount of hatred which only a perusal of their votes can explain. They were defenders of absolutism, slavery, and the bloody Penal Code; they were the resolute opponents of every political or social reform; and they had their reward from the nation outside Parliament. The Bishop of Bristol had his palace sacked and burnt; the Bishop of London could not keep an engagement to preach lest the congregation should stone him. The Bishop of Lichfield barely escaped with his life after preaching at St. Bride's, Fleet Street. Archbishop Howley, entering Canterbury for his primary visitation, "was insulted, spat upon, and only brought by a circuitous route to the Deanery, amid the execrations of the mob." On November 5 the Bishops were substituted for Guy Fawkes, and the Bishops of Exeter and Winchester were burnt in effigy close to their own palace gates. Archbishop Howley's chaplain complained that a dead cat had been thrown at him, when the Arch-

bishop—a man of apostolic meekness—replied: “You should be thankful that it was not a live one.” Poor chaplain! He, at any rate, knew by experience what a “living touch with the nation” meant when George IV. was King.

In 1829 Samuel Wilberforce, afterwards the famous Bishop, wrote to a friend: “I think that the Church will fall within fifty years entirely, and the State will not survive it much longer.” The Rev. W. Nassau Molesworth says in his *History of England from the Year 1830* that he could himself recall “the fierce shout of applause which rent the air at a large public meeting in Canterbury when one of the speakers suggested that the noble cathedral of that city should be converted into a stable for the horses of the cavalry.” In 1832 Dr. Arnold of Rugby wrote: “The Church, as it now stands, no human power can save.” William Wilberforce, the great Emancipator, died in 1833, just on the eve of the Tractarian Movement, and was buried with public honours in Westminster Abbey. One of the mourners, who went in Lord Calthorpe’s carriage, wrote: “There was about this time a strong feeling about Bishops, and, as we got out at the Abbey door, I heard one of the low fellows standing about say, in reply to another who appeared very surly and inclined to be disrespectful, ‘No! It’s not a Tulip’—meaning that there was no mitre on the panel.”

Such were some of the incidents of that “living touch with the nation” which, according to Bishop Diggle, the English Church enjoyed up to the fatal

year 1833, and lost through the Tractarian Movement. The subject is a tempting one; perhaps I may return to it another day, and may then enquire whether in reality a "living touch with the nation" is not one of the results of the Tractarian Movement, as popularized through the energies of that fervently spiritual force which Bishop Diggle's friends call "Ritualism."

In the meanwhile it will be interesting to see if the Bishop pushes his joke further, and maintains that Cornwallis and Manners-Sutton and Harcourt and Sumner were really in more "living touch with the nation" than those distinctive products of the Tractarian Movement, the present Bishops of London and Birmingham.

But paradox is apt to pall, and I trust that his lordship, having ventilated his joke, will now return to the safer path of platitude.

POSTSCRIPT

Most of the foregoing papers are reprinted from the Manchester Guardian. One appeared in the Cornhill Magazine, one in Putnam's Monthly, two in the Albany Review, and one in The Optimist.

My best thanks are due to the Editors who have so kindly allowed reproduction.

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G. W. E. R.

Michaelmas 1907.

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